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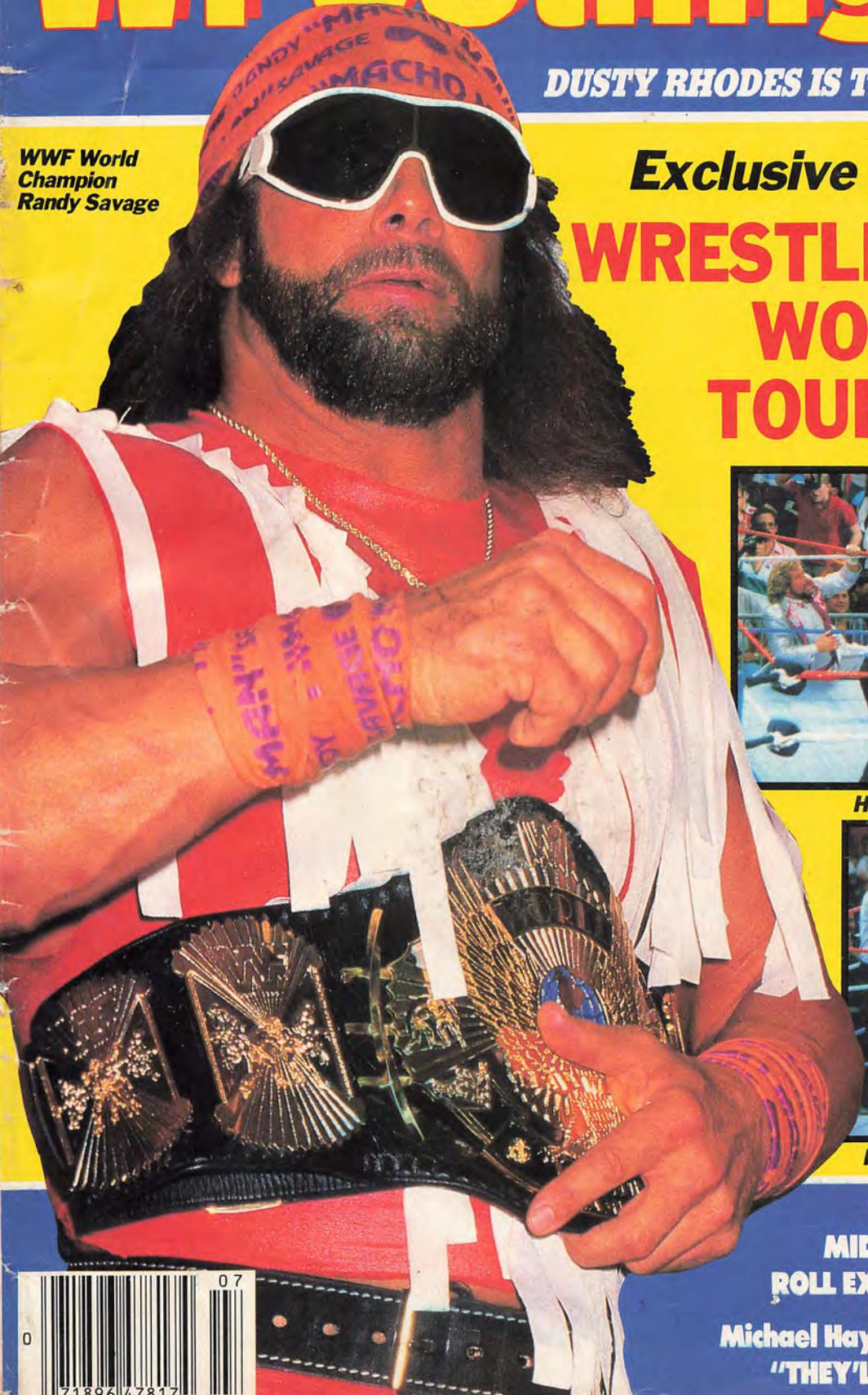
Wrestling

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Exclusive Photo Section: **WRESTLEMANIA IV WORLD TITLE TOURNAMENT!**



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Randy Savage Dumps Ted DiBiase

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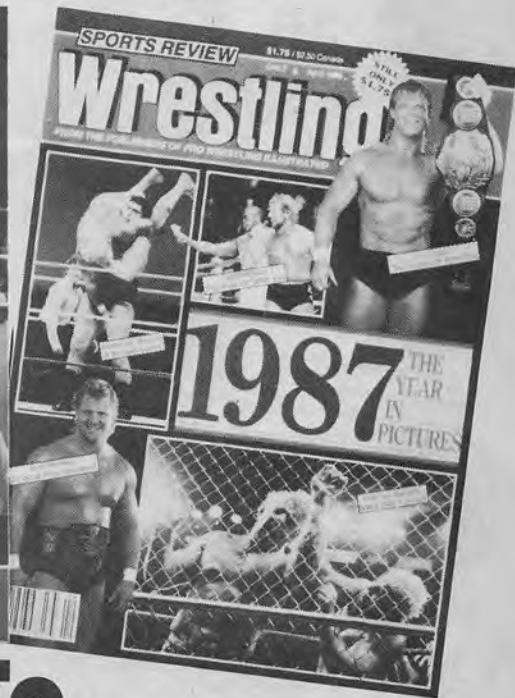
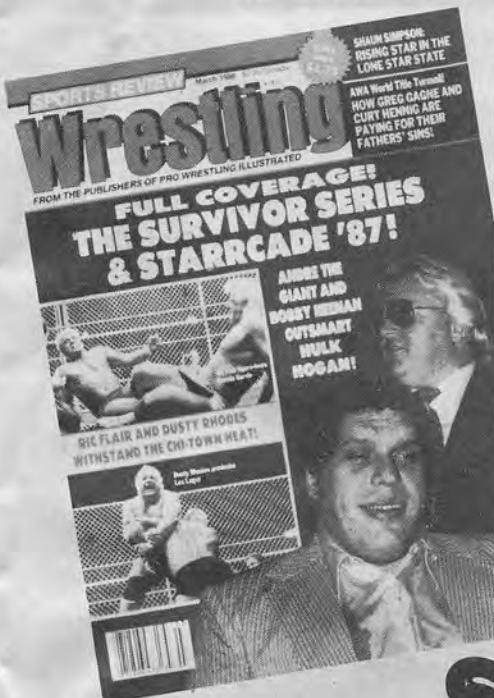
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MAILBAG

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STING WAS STUNG

On what was otherwise a terrific card of wrestling, the final match at the NWA's Clash of the Champions was a letdown.

What I'm talking about is the NWA World title match draw between Sting and Ric Flair. Granted, both mat legends gave their all for a full 45 minutes and, determining a winner was an almost impossible task. It was obvious that any judge's decision could never have taken the place of a solid pin or submission.

Well, you know what happened: a split decision in a match that the ring announcer declared *must* have a winner! Why have judges anyway if their decision is only going to cloud the result?

In my opinion as a longtime wrestling fan, I think Sting should have been given the decision. He had Flair in a number of physically damaging holds, leaving the champion no option but to struggle to the ropes for a break. Sting stood up to every chop and punch Flair threw, then bounced

back to mount an offense of his own. He had Flair on the run, even after Flair threw his very best at him. Sting should be the NWA World champion.

ANDI LANOUX
St. Paul

WRESTLEMANIA BORE

With all the hype and buildup leading to WrestleMania IV and the first-ever WWF World title tournament, I have to say that the event itself was totally anti-climactic.

The title tournament itself was boring, although I think Randy Savage will make a pretty good World champion (he can't be worse than Hulk Hogan was). The whole card, though, was too long—almost four hours! The battle royal was dull, the Honky Tonk Man-Brutus Beefcake match was ridiculous (neither of them knows the first thing about how to wrestle), and the Hercules-Ultimate Warrior match was even worse than Honky Tonk Beefcake!

There was no truly classic match at
(Continued on page 42)



Sting puts Ric Flair in an abdominal stretch during their incredible 45-minute match at the Clash of the Champions. Reader Andi Lanoux thought it was a great bout, but she would have preferred to see the judges choose a winner.

MICHAEL HAYES AND FABULOUS FREEBIRDS



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THE TATTER

GREENSBORO, NC: Western States champion Larry Zbyszko has joined former World Class champion Al Perez in the stable of veteran manager Gary Hart. Zbyszko had previously used Baby Doll as both his valet and manager.

Hart surprised wrestling observers by bringing Perez, one of the hottest prospects in the sport, to the NWA less than two weeks after he lost the World Class title to Kerry Von Erich in March. Hart claims Zbyszko's influence will aid Perez in winning the U.S. and NWA World titles.

"After 13 glorious years in wrestling, it's time to get a little more serious," said Zbyszko. "I'm flattered that a great mind like Hart would



LARRY ZBYSZKO

consider teaming me with Perez, the best young wrestler I've ever seen. As for me, I'm the man who retired [Bruno] Sammartino and [Nick] Bockwinkel, and now I'm gonna add Dusty Rhodes to complete the triple crown."

"The skills and savvy of Larry Zbyszko are legendary throughout the sport," boasted Hart. "His sheer brilliance will be another facet in the emerging talents of the great Perez. Lex Luger and Barry Windham should keep an eye on their [NWA World] belts, too. Al and Larry will form one of the greatest combinations the sport has ever seen."

Perez and Zbyszko were scheduled to compete as a late entry in the Jim Crockett Sr. Memorial Cup tag team tournament April 22 and 23. Hart has been at ringside for Zbyszko's defenses of his Western States belt. Both Hart and Zbyszko refused to comment on the fate of Baby Doll.

—Ken Miranda

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MEMPHIS, TN: Eddie Gilbert has enlisted veteran Dory Funk Jr. as a bounty hunter in his latest attempt to end the career of Jerry Lawler, and the former NWA World champion has promised "Hot Stuff" that he is the man to end this long-running CWA feud between the Gilbert family and "The King."

"Somehow, some way, that redneck Lawler has survived, and

(Continued on page 58)

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From time to time, the editors of this magazine find it necessary to condemn those in wrestling who would subvert the basic principles of decency, integrity, and honesty. Without such truths, our sport will die



THE BIRTH OF a child is a miraculous thing; the medical oddity of twins even more so. Triplets invariably command headlines in the national tabloids, and even the trio's parents often have difficulty telling their identical offspring apart.

What a tragedy it will be if the WWF reveals that referees Dave and Earl Hebner have a *third* identical brother. It's hard enough trying to tell the *two* Hebners apart!

And, incredibly, that doesn't seem to concern the WWF.

Confusion is still the ruling emotion regarding the startling events of February 5 in Indianapolis, when Hulk Hogan lost his WWF World title to Andre the Giant. That decision, you'll recall, was the result of a dubious three-count delivered by referee Earl Hebner, an evil twin of the referee who was *supposed* to officiate that bout, Dave Hebner. It is assumed that Ted DiBiase paid Earl Hebner a significant sum of money to make the bogus three-count that resulted in Hogan losing the title. It has also been speculated that Dave Hebner was the victim of a plot to keep him away from the arena—to *not* officiate that bout as he was supposed to.

The entire incident led to the title

being declared vacant and the declaration of a WrestleMania IV World title tournament.

So what happens during the tournament final at WrestleMania IV, the match that will determine the future course of the federation?

A Hebner is serving as referee.

The question that has to be answered, of course, is *which* Hebner?

The announcers during the telecast of WrestleMania IV didn't address the question. While it was clear that a Hebner was the referee for the final match, neither Gorilla Monsoon nor Jesse Ventura discussed the referee issue *at all* during the telecast. We would have expected the usually candid Ventura to at least *notice* that a

Hebner was in the ring.

Sports Review Wrestling posed the question of the referee's identity to the New Jersey State Athletic Commission, which assigns the officials. They could not say, though they did reveal that both Dave and Earl Hebner were licensed to work the card.

As a last resort, we tried to answer the question ourselves. But after studying the videotapes of the WrestleMania IV final and the February 5 debacle, we come up with only one conclusive fact:

There is no way to tell the two Hebners apart.

How could the WWF have failed to take the precautions necessary to make

(Continued on page 62)

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The Inquiring Reporter

No one knows wrestling better than the fans. Because of this, we're now giving these experts a forum for their views and opinions. Each month, we'll ask a controversial question and have the fans answer—no matter what those answers might be!

THE QUESTION:

"Do you think the level of sheer brutality is on the rise in wrestling?"

THE ANSWERS:

Eric Lowery, Washington, DC: "Absolutely. In just the past few months, wrestling has become a sport of unparalleled barbarism. Today's brutal rule-breaking is coming from a new breed of fan favorite. The Dusty Rhodes 'vengeance with a bat' incident, as well as Hulk Hogan's chair-wielding intervention at WrestleMania IV, show us that there's nothing worse than evil performed in the name of good. I mean, one expects Eddie Gilbert to throw fire at his enemies, or The Warlord to attempt to injure Road Warrior Animal, because these men are evil by nature. But there's no excuse for wrestlers who used to uphold the sport's integrity to turn bad. Their brutality sets a bad example."

Barbara Green, Great Neck, NY:

"Only on rare occasions have I approved of the type of sadism that currently exists in the world of wrestling. No one more than I enjoys seeing two well-muscled strongmen battle it out move for move. You can't take the physical aspect out of wrestling, but you can limit the excesses. Let's face it:



Eddie Gilbert throws a fireball at CWA promoter Jerry Jarrett. This kind of out-of-the-ring brutality is increasing, even among fan favorites who usually play by the rules.

The days of wrestlers relying only on their scientific skills are long gone. I wish a decent wrestler like Ric Flair wouldn't have to rely on self-disqualification and J.J. Dillon's interference, but he does. I blame the referees for letting it all get out of control."

Leslie Batchelor, Oklahoma City:

"Yes. And what's worse, not only do wrestlers resort to foreign objects, but most of the sport's managers interfere in a match at the drop of a hat! More than once I've seen managers do things that they would be arrested for if it

weren't for sanctioning by the sport. How many titles have to change hands because of outside interference before the federations wake up and decide to do something about it?"

Amanda Nelligan, Cut Bank, MT:

"Well, one man's brutality is another man's fair play. The sport has changed a lot over the past 30 years. Athletes have gotten stronger, the sport has gotten faster, so action gets harder. Ten years ago, a mat competitor would gouge and bloody the eyes of his op-

(Continued on page 60)

THE VIDEOTAPE EVENT OF THE YEAR!



Slant-Eyed Slaughter

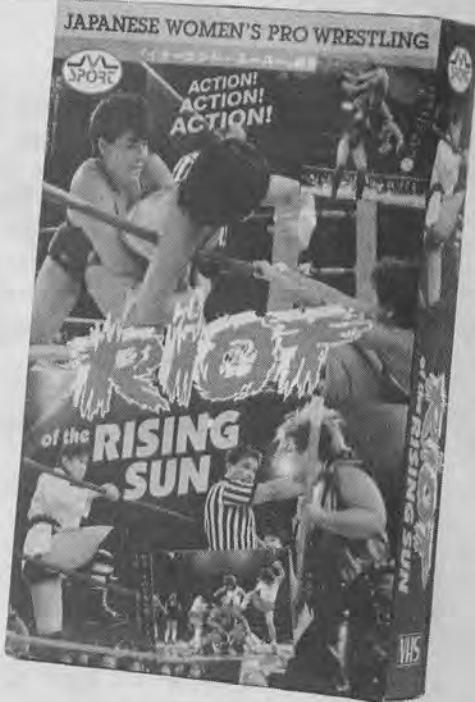
(running time: approximately 70 minutes)

- Wendi Richter & "Devil" Masami vs. Ayumi "Jumbo" Hori & Okumura
- Nancy Kumi vs. Lucy Kayama
- Monster Ripper & "Devil" Masami vs. Ayumi "Jumbo" Hori & Mimi Hagiwara
- "Jaguar" Rimi Yokota vs. Tarantula
- "Crush Girl" Lioness Asuka vs. "Crush Girl" Chigusa Nagayo

You've heard about them . . . you've read about them . . . now you can see them for yourself! Japanese women wrestlers are among the most agile, athletic, acrobatic—and vicious—competitors in the entire mat world. Now, two sensational videotapes bring the dynamic action of Japanese women's wrestling into your own home!

Sample The Excitement!

Jaguar Yokota, The Crush Girls, Devil Masami, The Jumping Bomb Angels, Dump Matsumoto—these are the legends of Japanese women's wrestling. They're all here, and more—including American superstar Wendi Richter. These matches, direct from Japanese television, include the kind of action that, until now, only satellite dish owners or Japanese fans could enjoy. These tapes are certain to become valued collectors' items. They include *complete* matches, not match excerpts!



Riot Of The Rising Sun

(running time: approximately 70 minutes)

- Yukari Omori & Ayumi "Jumbo" Hori vs. Noriyo Tateno & Itsuki Yamasaki—"The Jumping Bomb Angels"
- Masked You & Kaoru "Dump" Matsumoto vs. Lioness Asuka & Chigusa Nagayo—"The Crush Girls"
- "Jaguar" Rimi Yokota vs. Las Galactia
- "Jaguar" Rimi Yokota vs. "Devil" Masami

Special Magazine Offer:

In the past, you might have expected to spend upwards of \$59.95, \$69.95, or more for tapes of this quality. But now, for a limited time only, you can order **Slant-Eyed Slaughter** and **Riot Of The Rising Sun** for the special low price of only \$29.95 each (plus \$3.00 postage and handling). Witness all the excitement and thrills of Japanese women's wrestling—in your own home.

SPECIAL NOTE: These tapes, distributed by Powersports Video in association with American Video, are being sold exclusively for a limited time only in the United States by T.V. Sports. Both tapes include English play-by-play commentary recorded alongside the original Japanese commentary and crowd noise. While the English commentary is poor, the action level and match quality of these bouts more than makes up for it. We're convinced you'll be completely satisfied by these programs.

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(SORRY—VHS orders only)



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TOP WRESTLE YOUR QUESTION

Do you have a question you want answered by 10 of wrestling's top stars? Each month, *Sports Review*

Wrestling will publish a fan's "Question of the Month," which will be answered by the sport's top superstars. If you have a question you would like to see answered, send it to:

ASK THE STARS
Sports Review Wrestling
Box 48
Rockville Centre, NY 11571

THE "QUESTION OF THE MONTH" IS:

"What do you think of managerial interference?"

**Submitted by:
Sue Cook
Portland, ME**



RIC FLAIR

"There's no such thing, at least not where J.J. Dillon is concerned. Sting may claim that my manager has intervened at critical junctures in our previous meetings. But did Sting beat me at the Clash of the Champions when J.J. was suspended in a cage above the ring? Of course he didn't! My manager only helps me maintain my status as the best wrestler in the world."



BRUNO SAMMARTINO

"I think it's a disgrace, doggone it. When I was wrestling, there were plenty of times I was competing against two men, a wrestler and his manager! It wasn't right, it took away from the sport of the match itself. Nowadays, you get a champion like The Honky Tonk Man, and you know he would be nothing without the constant help of a lowlife like Jimmy Hart and his megaphone."



CAPT. LOU ALBANO

"Listen to me, daddy, I know what you're thinking, you're thinking that this relic, this dinosaur of wrestling, used to be the worst of the rulebreaking managers. Well, listen and listen good, 'cause I'm only going to say this once, since then I've seen the light of truth and justice, and now the Captain deplores that type of managerial child's play."



ROAD WARRIOR HAWK

"We don't need it! And teams who do need it aren't worth the spit I gob on them in disgust. The only time Paul interferes is to counteract the blatant interference by some slime like Paul Jones or Jim Cornette. Hell, I don't care if a team has 10 managers—they can all interfere, and they're not gonna be able to send The Legion of Doom down in defeat."

WRESTLERS ANSWER OF THE MONTH

**JIM CORNETTE**

"Are you kidding? I never interfere! There's a conspiracy between the referees, announcers, magazines, and everyone else in the sport to besmirch my good reputation, and I think it's awful! In fact, I'm going to go to my mother's lawyers and bring a slander suit against everyone who's been claiming that I *do* interfere. This magazine will hear from my attorney in the morning."

**KERRY VON ERICH**

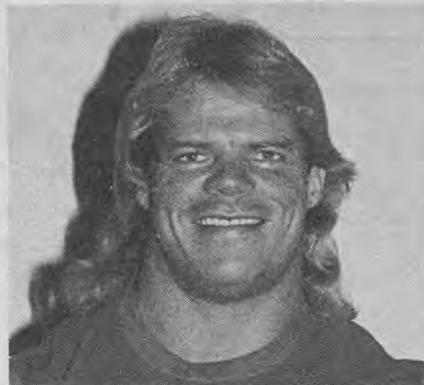
"It's really a shame that so many managers in the sport feel that they have to interfere in matches. The value of a victory is completely eliminated when someone's interference is involved in the decision. It's tempting for someone at ringside to want to interfere when his man is losing, and that's why I've proposed that managers be banned from ringside during *all* matches."

**GARY HART**

"Now hold it right there, mister. I know what you're saying, and I don't like the allegations. For one thing, it seems that every time a wrestler gets tossed from the ring, they think it's a good chance to beat on the guy's manager. I never throw the first punch, but too many wrestlers out there think a trip to the apron includes a free ticket to pound on me."

**BROTHER ERNEST ANGEL**

"Friends, I'm a peace-loving man with a firm belief in wrestling integrity. I know that some managers prefer to replace the message of brotherhood with hostility, while I only strive to save a few souls with my good book. The wrestlers who have joined my coalition have come to understand the importance of the good book in and out of the ring, and I know others will, too."

**LEX LUGER**

"I was managed by Bob Roop and by J.J. Dillon. I can tell you from experience that most managers only care about wins, not how that win is achieved. And that's a shame. Frankly, I prefer not having any manager at all. When I win, I want to know that I've won on my own merits, not on the interference of my manager."

**CURT HENNIG**

"Hell, I don't worry about managerial interference. But it seems that whenever I get in a match with Greg Gagne, his father Verne comes running down the aisle to help him out. Greg could be an almost capable wrestler if it weren't for his father always bailing him out. Manager interference? I think something ought to be done about his *father's* interference!"

BACK ISSUES OF



THE WRESTLER

Don't miss a single issue of the magazine that has thrilled wrestling fans for two generations, THE WRESTLER. Complete your collection of the most respected wrestling publication in the world today. Supplies are limited. Don't delay—order today!

June 1975/Stories include: Andre, Muraco, Funk, Lawler.

August 1975/Stories include: Sammartino, Patterson, Stasiak, Rivera.

December 1975/Stories include: Mascaras, Rhodes, McDaniel, Blackjacks.

February 1976/Stories include: Andre, Sammartino, Rhodes, Valentine.

July 1976/Stories include: Andre, Wrestling II, Inoki, Von Erich.

November 1976/Stories include: Sammartino, Andre, Valentine, Mosca.

December 1976/Stories include: Von Erich, Mulligan, Brody, Funk.

January 1977/Stories include: Brody, Andre, Wrestling II, Mascaras.

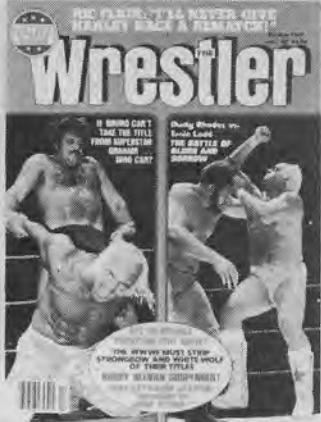
February 1977/Stories include: Sammartino, Jones, Funk, Von Raschke.

April 1977/Stories include: Sammartino, Funk, Flair, Bockwinkel.

May 1977/Stories include: Mascaras, Valiants, Andersons, Sammartino.

June 1977/Stories include: Patera, Putski, Hernandez, McDaniel.

July 1977/Stories include: Backlund, Rhodes, Rocca, Mascaras.



OCTOBER 1977

October 1977/Stories include: Rhodes, Sammartino, Flair, Snuka.

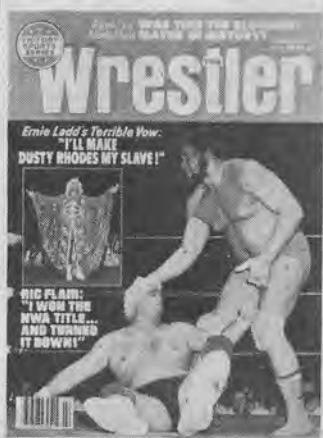
November 1977/Stories include: Sammartino, Slater, Mascaras, Snuka.

September 1978/Stories include: Rhodes, Grahams, Andre, Mascaras.

October 1978/Stories include: Sammartino, Backlund, McDaniel, Race.

November 1978/Stories include: Flair, Andre, Ladd, Graham.

December 1978/Stories include: Brisco, Mulligan, Andre, Blanchard.



FEBRUARY 1979

February 1979/Stories include: Ladd, Flair, Idol, Heenan.

May 1979/Stories include: Steamboat, Brody, Valiants, Race.

July 1979/Stories include: Wrestling II, Backlund, Sammartino, Andre.

August 1979/Stories include: Bockwinkel, Patera, Stevens, Superstar.

September 1979/Stories include: Superstar Gramham, Cyclone Negro, Greg Gagne, Mil Mascaras.

October 1979/Stories include: Flair, Valentine, Santana, Muraco.

December 1979/Stories include: Andre, Graham, Rhodes, Mascaras.

January 1980/Stories include: Race, Backlund, Snuka, Brisco.

February 1980/Stories include: Andre, Flair, DiBiase, Superstar.

March 1980/Stories include: Sammartino, Murdoch, Mulligan, Andre.

April 1980/Stories include: Rhodes, DiBiase, Youngblood, Wrestling II.

May 1980/Stories include: Andre, Mascaras, Bockwinkel, Patera.

June 1980/Stories include: Backlund, Abdullah, Brisco, Flair.

August 1980/Stories include: Valentine, Zbyszko, Von Erich, Albano.

September 1980/Stories include: Ladd, Patera, Steamboat, Gagne.

October 1980/Stories include: Patera, Rhodes, Wrestling II, Morales.

January 1981/Stories include: Valentine, Rhodes, Patera, Von Erich.

February 1981/Stories include: Zbyszko, Patera, Iron Sheik, Wrestling II.

March 1981/Stories include: Rich, Samoa, Blassie, Wrestling II.

May 1981/Stories include: Backlund, Rhodes, DiBiase, Moondogs.

June 1981/Stories include: Sammartino, Piper, Rich, Martel.



JULY 1981

July 1981/Stories include: Backlund, Rhodes, Flair, Atlas.

August 1981/Stories include: DiBiase, Slaughter, Martel, Idol.

October 1981/Stories include: Funks, Rhodes, Race, Sullivan.

January 1982/Stories include: Rich, Steamboat, Sullivan, Sammartino.



JANUARY 1982

March 1982/Stories include: Slaughter, Albano, Flair, Race.

April 1982/Stories include: Brisco, Armstrongs, Valentine, Santana.

May 1982/Stories include: Backlund, Von Erich, Graham, Rich.

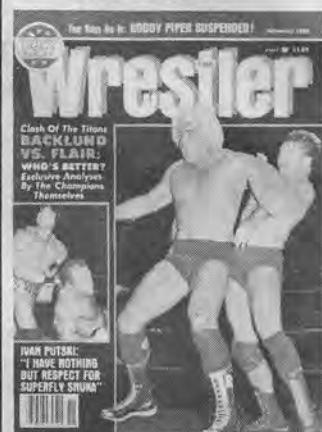
June 1982/Stories include: Steamboat, Reed, Albano, Piper.

July 1982/Stories include: Rich, Sawyer, Flair, Steamboat.

August 1982/Stories include: Bockwinkel, Steamboat, Mulligans, Piper.

September 1982/Stories include: Rhodes, Hogan, Armstrong, Blair.

October 1982/Stories include: Snuka, Rhodes, Santana, Piper.



NOVEMBER 1982

November 1982/Stories include: Flair, Snuka, Piper, Blair.

December 1982/Stories include: Snuka, Rich, Kamala, Junkyard Dog.

January 1983/Stories include: Putski, Muraco, Windham, Bockwinkel.

February 1983/Stories include: Bockwinkel, Backlund, Rich, Kamala.

April 1983/Stories include: Rhodes, Tiger Mask, Sammartino, Bundy.

May 1983/Stories include: Samoa, Von Erich, Rhodes, Orndorff.

June 1983/Stories include: Windham, Martel, Brody, Andre.

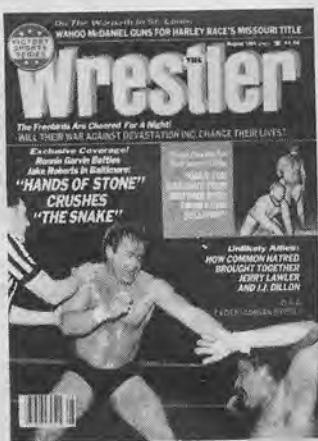
July 1983/Stories include: Flair, Adonis, Sullivan, Zbyszko.

August 1983/Stories include: Valentine, Blanchard, Windham, Street.

September 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Ellering, Von Erich, Briscos.

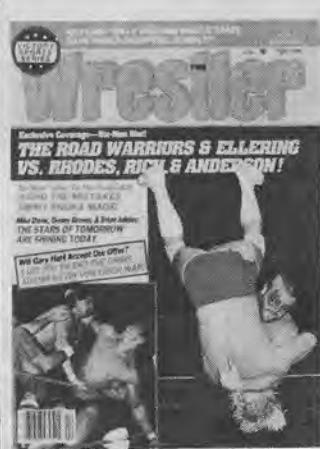
October 1983/Stories include: Race, Sawyer, Briscos, Bass.

November 1983/Stories include: Rhodes, Santana, Von Erichs, Kabuki.
December 1983/Stories include: Macho, Superstar, Von Erich, Zbyszko.
January 1984/Stories include: Valentine, Hogan, Von Erich, Road Warriors.
March 1984/Stories include: Santana, Hogan, Von Erich, Sawyers.
April 1984/Stories include: Hogan, Ellering, Von Erich, Rhodes.
May 1984/Stories include: Windham, Brody, Road Warriors, Junkyard Dog.
June 1984/Stories include: Von Erich, Billy Jack, Flair, Armstrong.
July 1984/Stories include: Rich, Billy Jack, Valiant, Von Erich.



AUGUST 1984

August 1984/Stories include: Garvin, Sullivan, Freebirds, Street.
September 1984/Stories include: Von Erich, Piper, Steamboat, Billy Jack.
October 1984/Stories include: Flair, Rhodes, Magnum T.A., Bundy.
November 1984/Stories include: Billy Jack, Von Erich, Piper, Brody.
December 1984/Stories include: Martel, Santana, Von Erich, Steamboat.
January 1985/Stories include: Von Erich, Warriors, Albano, Koloffs.
February 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Santana, Billy Jack, Nikita Koloff.
March 1985/Stories include: Slaughter, Warriors, Martel, Rude.



APRIL 1985

April 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Von Erich-Adams, Flair, Tonga & Snuka.
May 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Backlund, Santana, Rich.
June 1985/Stories include: Rhodes, Windham, Rich, Hogan.
July 1985/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Reed, Martel, Sunshine.
August 1985/BONUS 4-PG. COLOR SECTION! Plus: Warriors, Magnum T.A., Sheik & Volkoff, McGraw.
September 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Von Erich, Savage, R&R Express.
October 1985/Stories include: Flair, Windham, Shultz, Martel.

November 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Zbyszko, R&R Express, Von Erichs.
December 1985/Stories include: Rude, Fantastics, Muraco, Uncle Elmer.
January 1986/20th Anniversary Issue! 10 Greatest Wrestlers, Rhodes, Hogan, Sammartino.
February 1986/Stories include: Hogan, Ondorf, Flair, Hansen.
March 1986/Stories include: Von Erich, Duggan, Hansen-Martel.
April 1986/Stories include: Von Erich, Rude, Lugar, Hogan, Magnum T.A.
May 1986/Stories include: Zbyszko, Von Erichs, Santana-Ventura, Hillbillies.
June 1986/Stories include: Lugar, Hernandez, Flair-Bockwinkel, Hogan, T.A.

July 1986/Stories include: King Kong Bundy, Koloff vs. Graham, Ric Flair.
August 1986/Stories include: Snuka, Bulldogs, Freebirds, Warriors, Duggan.
September 1986/Stories include: Fantastics, Adonis, Morton-Flair, Brody.
October 1986/Stories include: Nikita-Magnum, Nord, Bruno, Kerr, Windham.
November 1986/Stories include: R&R Express, Hogan-Ondorf, Von Erich.
December 1986/Stories include: Flair, Bockwinkel, Hogan, Gilbert, Nikita.
January 1987/Stories include: Heenan, Garvin, DiBiase, Borne & Sawyer.
February 1987/Stories include: Magnum T.A., Gordy, Steamboat-Roberts.
March 1987/Stories include: Windham, Nikita, Adias, Savage-Steamboat.

December 1987/Stories include: Hogan, Windham, Lawler, Flair, Beefcake.
January 1988/Stories include: Nikita-Taylor, Warriors, DiBiase-Duggan.
February 1988/Stories include: Flair, Andre-Hogan, New Breed, Kerr.



MARCH 1988

March 1988/Stories include: Hogan, Luger-Sting, Calgary, Demolition.
April 1988/Special issue! Starrcade '87, Survivor Series, AWA & World Class. Also: Strike Force, Luger, Rockers.
May 1988/Luger-Horsemen, Hogan, Flair-Hart, Fantastics, DiBiase.
June 1988/Sting-Flair, DiBiase, Kerr, Nikita, Zenk.



MAY 1987

May 1987/Stories include: Flair-Nikita, Andre-Hogan, UWF, Windham, Hennig.
June 1987/Stories include: Flair-Windham, Can-Ams, Rhodes-Murdoch.
July 1987/Stories include: Cornette, Hyatt, Luger, Harts, Adams, Hansen.
August 1987/Stories include: Can-Ams, Luger vs. Nikita, Fantastics, Koko, Nord.
September 1987/Stories include: Koloff, Harts, Duggan, Hennig, Hart.
October 1987/Stories include: Savage-Honky Tonk, Horsemen, Patera, Kerr.
November 1987/Stories include: Williams, Luger, Hogan-Khan, Rich.

THE WRESTLER

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WRESTLER OF THE MONTH

RANDY SAVAGE

THE NEW WAVE in athletic competition these days is Iron Man Triathlons. An obvious takeoff of the rigorous physical tests of the ancient Greek decathlon, the Iron Man Triathlon's demands on its participants are considerable: bicycle 50 miles, swim three miles in rough ocean currents, then run a marathon of 26.6 miles—all in one day!

But look out, sports fans, Randy Savage has just upped the ante. The endurance he exhibited in winning an unprecedented four matches in a row—and the WWF World title—at WrestleMania IV will stand for many years as a remarkable test of athletic stamina and intestinal fortitude.

For not backing down in the face of four championship-caliber opponents, for gaining victories over Butch Reed, Greg Valentine, One Man Gang, and Ted DiBiase, and for forging ahead and capturing the WWF World title, Randy Savage has been selected "Wrestler of the Month."

No one else in the tournament could have matched the endurance of the "Macho Man." Nobody else had to. Even tournament favorite Hulk Hogan received a bye through the first round, thus facing a maximum of three matches on WrestleMania Sunday.

Savage's place in the tournament bracket, it can be argued, afforded him with the toughest possible opponents of the day. Reed is widely regarded as a highly formidable wrestler; Valentine is an aggressive veteran; Gang is a major problem in terms of size and power. A first- or second-round match with Dino Bravo or Rick Rude, or a scientific bout against Hacksaw Duggan or Don Muraco, would have made Savage's day significantly easier.

Savage's first match, a 5:07 slugfest with the powerful Reed, showed that the "Macho Man's" advantage in the match was not in mounting a powerful offensive, but in absorbing "The Natural's" astounding array of slams, suplexes, and legdrops. Indeed, had Reed not been distracted by the lovely Elizabeth, Savage might not have made it past the first round.

But he did survive Reed's assault, pinning "The Natural" following an elbow off the top rope. That victory led him directly into his second-round bout with Greg "The Hammer" Valentine. This 6:06 match ably demonstrated the value and significance of Valentine's nickname.

At the beginning of the match it appeared that "The Hammer" was a man with a mission, gaining an early advantage with a series of slams. A powerful shoulder-breaker almost led to a Valentine pin, but Savage still had enough strength to kick out of a pin attempt at the two-count.

At that point, Valentine began an out-of-the-ring assault

on the fatigued "Macho Man." After throwing Savage out of the ring, "The Hammer" executed a perfect flying elbow, then threw Savage against the steel ring barrier. Savage looked genuinely spent. One backbreaker later, it seemed like nothing could stop Valentine . . .

Except his own carelessness. As the action returned to the ring, an attempt at a figure-four leglock was suddenly reversed into a small-package pin for the "Macho Man." An exhausted Savage could move on to face One Man Gang.

Although the third-round match was Savage's shortest, lasting only 4:05, he hardly had an easy time of it.

Gang, who had a 223-pound advantage over Savage, utilized his immense size to manhandle his weary opponent. Gang was well rested, as he received a second-round bye when the Roberts-Rude match went to a time-limit draw.

Savage had trouble trying to wear down the formidable giant, and he drew on deep reserves of adrenaline and determination simply to stay in the match. His persistence paid off when Slick handed his cane to Gang, who used it against Savage and promptly earned himself a disqualification.

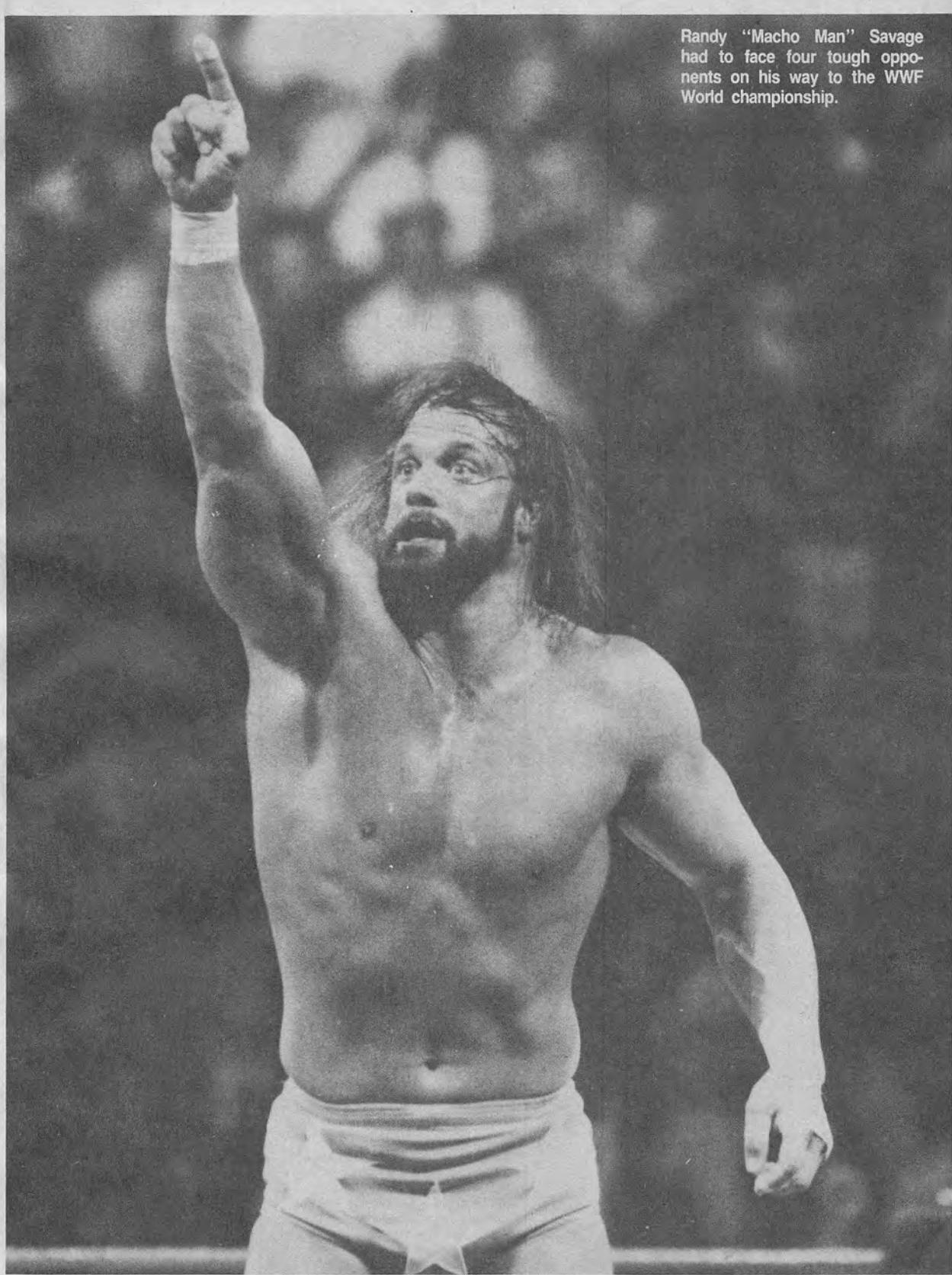
The WrestleMania IV final match will stand forever as testimony to Savage's amazing stamina. Having already battled through three opponents, the "Macho Man" endured a grueling 9:27 match against a well-rested DiBiase (who earned a bye into the final when the Hogan-Andre the Giant bout ended in a double-disqualification) to gain the title. But how he endured is what counts.

Battling a wrestler of DiBiase's skill would be difficult enough, but Savage had to contend with Andre's interference, having been tripped up twice from ringside by the Giant. With Andre's assistance, DiBiase was able to enjoy an advantage through most of the match and employ his impressive scientific repertoire against Savage. In the end, Hogan was summoned to ringside to counteract the interference of Andre, and it was ultimately Hogan's interference with a chair that led to Savage's final pinfall on DiBiase.

But Hogan's aid, while tainting the victory itself, does not diminish the significance of Savage's physical achievement. With or without Hogan's help, Savage wrestled four tough matches against formidable and (in three of four cases) well-rested opponents.

It was a test of endurance that will be remembered for generations. It was worthy of the WWF World title, and it's certainly worthy of this issue's "Wrestler of the Month" honor. □

JULY 1988



Randy "Macho Man" Savage had to face four tough opponents on his way to the WWF World championship.

BACK ISSUES OF

Inside

Wrestling



Be sure to fill in the gaps in your collection of INSIDE WRESTLING, "The magazine that rips the lid off pro wrestling." Get all the information you need to keep up on the pro wrestling scene. Don't be left out. Avoid sellouts—order today!

July 1974/Stories include: Garea, Zbysko, Heenan, Strongbow.

September 1974/Stories include: Sammartino, Graham, Brooks, Bruiser.

November 1974/Stories include: Garvin, Mascaras, Sammartino, Graham.

August 1975/Stories include: Valentine, Garea, Rhodes, Sammartino.

September 1975/Stories include: Mascaras, Funk, Valiant, Gagne.

February 1976/Stories include: Andre, Strongbow, Lewin, Brazil.

March 1976/Stories include: Ladd, Funk, Sheik, Robinson.

April 1976/Stories include: Mascaras, Albano, Flair, Brisco.

August 1976/Stories include: Funks, Mascaras, Sammartino, Putski.

September 1976/Stories include: Andre, Funk, Hansen, Mascaras.

October 1976/Stories include: Sammartino, Race, Johnson, Jones.

November 1976/Stories include: Mascaras, Wrestling II, Funk, Sammartino.

December 1976/Stories include: Stasiak, Rhodes, Bockwinkel, Orton.

January 1977/Stories include: Sammartino, Brisco, Funk, Gagne.

March 1978/Stories include: Rhodes, Valentine, Backlund, Bockwinkel.

April 1978/Stories include: Backlund, Graham, Steamboat, Bruiser.

August 1978/Stories include: Backlund, Rhodes, Andre, Hansen.



OCTOBER 1978

October 1978/Stories include: Sammartino, Andre, Rhodes, McDaniel.

November 1978/Stories include: Rhodes, Backlund, Flair, Steamboat.

December 1978/Stories include: Sammartino, Rhodes, Wrestling II, Bravo.

January 1979/Stories include: Sammartino, Mulligan, Rhodes, Backlund.



AUGUST 1977

August 1977/Stories include: Backlund, Graham, Mascaras, Lawler.

September 1977/Stories include: Sammartino, Andre, Mascaras, Brisco.

October 1977/Stories include: Andre, Rhodes, Backlund, Mulligan.

November 1977/Stories include: Graham, Rhodes, Mascaras, Gagne.

December 1977/Stories include: Andre, Mascaras, Johnson, Maivia.

February 1979/Stories include: Race, Sammartino, Steamboat, Ladd.

April 1979/Stories include: Andre, Flair, Backlund, Jones.

May 1979/Stories include: Steamboat, Rhodes, Backlund, Heenan.

June 1979/Stories include: Rhodes, Superstar, Bockwinkel, Backlund.

July 1979/Stories include: Rhodes, Ladd, Valiant, Brower.

August 1979/Stories include: Flair, Garvin, Race, Sammartino.

September 1979/Stories include: Steamboat, Mascaras, Strongbow, Garvin.

February 1980/Stories include: Patera, Snuka, Santana, Albano.

April 1980/Stories include: Hogan, Rich, Backlund, Mascaras.

May 1980/Stories include: Sammartino, Murdoch, Mulligan, Bockwinkel.

June 1980/Stories include: Putski, Andre, Hernandez, Keirn.

August 1980/Stories include: Sammartino, Wrestling II, Baker, Koloff.



JANUARY 1982

January 1982/Stories include: Flair, Hogan, Race, Humperdink.

February 1982/Stories include: Valentine, Flair, Steamboat, Rhodes.

March 1982/Stories include: Rich, Backlund, Idol, Spoiler.

April 1982/Stories include: Rhodes, Andre, Von Erich, Piper.

May 1982/Stories include: Backlund, Rhodes, Hogan, Von Erich.

June 1982/Stories include: Valentine, Von Erich, Slaughter, Morales.

July 1982/Stories include: Hogan, Rhodes, Steamboat, Adonis.

August 1982/Stories include: Andre, Bockwinkel, Steamboat, Backlund.

September 1982/Stories include: Atlas, Piper, Lawler, Brody.

October 1982/Stories include: Rich, Andre, Piper, Dillon.

November 1982/Stories include: Flair, Snuka, Von Erich, Slaughter.

December 1982/Stories include: Mulligan, Rich, Lawler, Grand Wizard.

February 1983/Stories include: Rhodes, Hogan, DiBiase, Race.

March 1983/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Graham, Johnson, Funk.

April 1983/Stories include: Snuka, Patera, Kabuki, Rich.

May 1983/Stories include: Rich, Snuka, Sullivan, Steamboat.

June 1983/Stories include: Studd, Garvin, Rogers, Orton.

July 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Freebirds, Rhodes, Youngblood.

August 1983/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Garvin, Sullivan, Lawler.

JANUARY 1979



SEPTEMBER 1983

September 1983/Stories include: Zbyszko, Piper, Andre, Hayes.
October 1983/Stories include: Wrestling II, Backlund, Junkyard Dog, Rhodes.
November 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Reed, Von Erich, Dillon.
December 1983/Stories include: Von Erich, Samoans, Valiant, Road Warriors.
March 1984/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Rich, Rhodes, Garvin.
April 1984/Stories include: Flair, Steamboat, Superstar, Windham.
May 1984/Stories include: Iron Sheik, Steamboat, Rotundo, Von Erich.
June 1984/Stories include: Flair, Slaughter, Cornette, DiBiase.
July 1984/Stories include: Valiant, Flair, Martel, Wrestling II.
August 1984/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Magnum T.A., Idol, Spoiler.
September 1984/Stories include: Martel, Brody, Von Erich, Iron Sheik.
October 1984/Stories include: Billy Jack, Road Warriors, Steamboat, Piper.
November 1984/Stories include: Rhodes, Rich, Hernandez, Warriors.
December 1984/Stories include: Hogan, Warriors, Sullivan, Magnum T.A.
January 1985/Stories include: Magnum T.A., Rhodes, Atlas, Von Erich.
February 1985/Stories include: Rich, Adams, Valiant, Flair.
March 1985/Stories include: Backlund, Billy Jack, Koloffs, Von Erichs.



APRIL 1985

April 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Albano & Hogan, Steamboat, Gordy.
May 1985/Stories include: Slaughter, Garvin, Albano, Koloffs.
June 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Slaughter, Von Erichs, Studd & Patera.
July 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Von Erich, Nikita, Warriors.
August 1985/Stories include: Wrestlemania, Zbyszko vs. The Tonga Kid.



AUGUST 1985

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- MAY 84
- APR 87
- SEPT 74
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- JUNE 84
- MAY 87
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- NOV 83
- DEC 86
- SEPT 79
- DEC 83
- JAN 87
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- APR 84
- MAR 87

September 1985/Stories include: Piper, Flair, Fantastics, Magnum T.A.
October 1985/Stories include: Russian menace, Von Erichs, Rude & Barr.
November 1985/Stories include: Steamboat, Adams, Freebirds, Cornette.
December 1985/Stories include: Santana, Brody, Andersons, Murdoch.
January 1986/Stories include: Steamboat, Mike Von Erich, Warriors.
February 1986/Stories include: R'n'R Express, Warriors, Mulligan & Windham.
March 1986/Stories include: Windham & Rotundo, Warriors-Russians, Rude.
April 1986/Stories include: Scott Hall, Rhodes, Flair, Andre, Bill Watts.
May 1986/Stories include: Randy Savage, Stan Hansen, Rock 'n' Rolls.

February 1987/Stories include: Hogan-Piper-Orndorff, Taylor, Flair.
March 1987/Stories include: Flair, Missy, Luger, Bulldogs, Koloffs.
April 1987/Stories include: Windham, Steamboat, Ellering, Duggan.
May 1987/Stories include: Windham & Luger, Steamboat, Hogan-Andre.
June 1987/Stories include: Piper-Adonis, Horsemen, Adams, Hall, Brody.
July 1987/Stories include: Danny Davis, DiBiase, Rockers, Rotundo, Andersons.



AUGUST 1987

August 1987/Stories include: Dusty & Nikita, Hogan, Mike Von, Cornette.
September 1987/Stories include: Hogan-Race, R&R Exp., Rich, Honky Tonk.
October 1987/Stories include: R&R Express, Hogan, Taylor-Adams, Lawler.
November 1987/Stories include: War Games, Mr. T, Bulldogs, Rhodes.
December 1987/Stories include: Freebirds, Rhodes, Magnum, Savage, Perez.
January 1988/Stories include: R&R-Horsemen, Hogan, Flair-Garvin.
February 1988/Stories include: Savage, Kevin Von, Sting, Tully & Arn.
March 1988/Stories include: Bigelow, Adams, Koloff, Honky Tonk, Freebirds.
April 1988/Stories include: Luger-Flair, Ultimate Warrior, Andre-Hogan-Dibiase.
May 1988/Stories include: Zbyszko, DiBiase, Warriors, Rockers, Fritz Von.
June 1988/Stories include: Warriors, Savage, R&R Express, Baby Doll.

JUNE 1986

June 1986/Stories include: Bulldogs, Windham-Flair, Lance Von, Blanchard.
July 1986/All-American Special Issue: Stories include: Hogan, Slaughter, T.A.
August 1986/Stories include: Wrestlemania 2, Garvin, Martel, Fab Ones.
September 1986/Stories include: Andre, Rhodes-T.A., Adams, Windham.
October 1986/Stories include: Flair-Lugar, Savage, Fantastics, Warriors.
November 1986/Stories include: Warriors-Flair, Bulldogs, Watts, Adams.
December 1986/Stories include: Hogan-Adonis, R&R Express, Baby Doll.
January 1987/Stories include: Rude-Flair, Piper, T.A., Taylor.

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INTERVIEW

THE FANTASTICS

FANS ACROSS THE country were thrilled when Tommy Rogers and Bobby Fulton, better known as *The Fantastics*, decided to invade the NWA for the first time. Their goal was to work their way into contention for the NWA World tag team championship, but they immediately found themselves engaged in a horribly violent feud against U.S. tag team champions *The Midnight Express*. Putting both teams in the same ring is like pouring gasoline on a raging fire.

Given the histories of these teams, Rogers and Fulton probably knew this war was forthcoming. It was four years ago when they defeated the Express (then comprised of Dennis Condrey and Bobby Eaton) for the World Class tag team championship. Stan Lane has since replaced Condrey, but Jim Cornette has never forgotten—or forgiven—*The Fantastics* for stripping his men of those belts; he has instructed the Midnights to keep their current U.S. title at all costs.

A highlight of the Clash of the Champions at the Greensboro Coliseum on March 27 was the wild bout between these teams. A frantic Cornette pushed his men to new levels of brutality to prevent a title loss. Subsequent bouts have been every bit as frenzied, but *The Fantastics* continue to steadily inch closer to their first U.S. tag team championship.

Fulton and Rogers have proven themselves to be worthy contenders to any title. When they met in 1984, they both were former U.S. junior heavy-



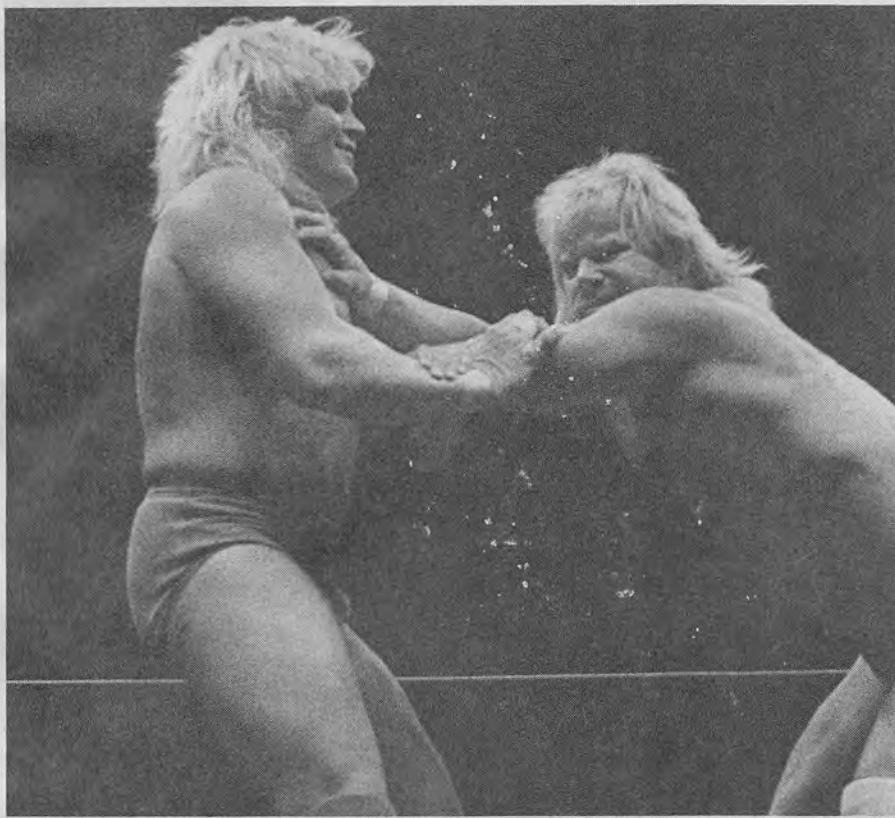
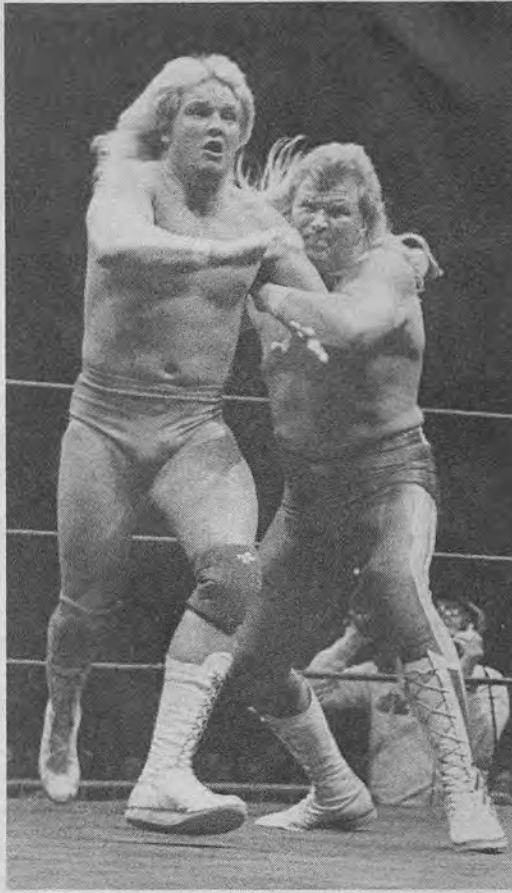
The Fantastics—Tommy Rogers and Bobby Fulton—are creating new tag team excitement in the NWA. Their first goal: the U.S. belts belonging to *The Midnight Express*.

weight champions in singles competition. They formed a superior team despite their relatively small sizes (Fulton is 5'9" and 220 pounds, Rogers is 5'10" and 222 pounds). Their championship record, which also includes the Mid-South and UWF tag titles, is as impressive as their energetic ring style.

Rogers is a talented practitioner of aerial wrestling, and his breathtaking

"Rogers Rocket" leap off the top rope has thrilled millions. Fulton provides a canny blend of science and speed, and rarely makes a tactical error during a match. Together, they are a finely tuned machine.

Senior Editor Bill Apter caught up with *The Fantastics* in Atlanta to discuss their war with Cornette and his *Midnight Express*.



Q: Bob and Tommy, it's been too long since we last spoke. I'm not surprised to see you guys as huge favorites in the NWA, even though you've only been here for a short time. You've certainly won the hearts of these fans.

TR: Thanks a lot, Bill. You're right about the way the fans have reacted to us. All of the emotional

highs we've gotten from these people have been very exciting. I had no idea this kind of reception was in store for us!

BF: That's right. There are a lot of teams that the fans seem to enjoy, but few wrestlers enjoy the support of the people as much as we do. What makes it even more fun is that everything we've heard

The Fantastics and the Midnights engage in a wild brawl on national TV (top left). That led to a showdown at the Clash of the Champions, where Fulton armbars Stan Lane (left) and gets whipped across the ring by Bobby Eaton (above).

about NWA fans is true. Not only do these people know how to party, but they know their wrestling inside and out. It's a real pleasure to be here, and we hope it's for a long, long time.

Q: It can't be much of a pleasure to get involved in such a dangerous feud with The Midnight Express and Jim Cornette, though. You barely got your feet wet in the NWA when they went after you with a maniacal vengeance.

BF: We went after them, Bill. There's nothing we would like more than to take those U.S. belts from Lane and Eaton. When Cornette found out we were coming into the area, he lost his cookies, from what I heard. He's out of his mind! He still hasn't gotten over the way we knocked off Condrey and Eaton for the World Class belts a few years ago.

Q: But were you prepared for these kinds of battles right off the bat? The Midnights and Cornette intentionally tried to injure you during a TV match, and again at the Clash of the Champions. It seems they tried to throw everything at you but the kitchen sink—literally! Tables and chairs were being tossed everywhere. You were lucky to escape alive.

TR: Those skunks sunk to a new low. Lane messed up my nose when they rammed my head into a table. Eaton tore ligaments in Bobby's hand when he beat on him outside the ring, and later they both whipped him like a dog with Cornette's belt. All this, and we got disqualified! They're gonna pay dearly for this.

BF: I caused the DQ, but I just couldn't take it anymore. I mean, we had been hit by tables and a tennis racket. We were thrown onto the ring railing and slammed into wooden tables. We were double- and triple-teamed. Then that ref, Randy Anderson, gave us a hard time! I lost my cool and tossed him out. It was the second time the Express tried to injure us. But as you can see, they weren't too successful.

Q: It looks like things are a long way from being over, unfortunately.

TR: Yeah, they're just starting, in fact. But we're glad about it. If you notice, even in the matches where Lane and Eaton pulled out all the stops to hurt us, we still managed to take everything they dished out. I think when I pinned Lane in Greensboro it should have counted, but that won't stop us from getting rid of the Express once and for all. You can sense their desperation. It's only a matter of time.

BF: Got that right, Tommy. Cornette's had his way with too many people for too long. He'll find out that his mamma's money can't buy everything, and it won't help him at all when the U.S. belts are around our waists.

Q: What do you think about the



Rogers executes a flying headscissors on Eaton in Texas in 1985 (above). Fulton has his own racket for the match (right).

other tag teams in the NWA? Even if you gain the U.S. championship, it figures to be hard to hold with all the great combinations around.

BF: I don't know if I agree with that, Bill. I think that Tommy and I have reached the peak of our careers right now, and it will be awfully tough to beat us. We really have our teamwork and maneuvers down to a science, and I don't think there's anyone who can match us hold-for-hold. I really don't.

TR: I agree with Bobby. We're on a roll right now, although you are right in one respect. Man, there are so many fine teams around, like Luger and Windham, Barbarian and Warlord, The Road Warriors, The Varsity Club, Blanchard and Anderson . . .

Q: . . . and The Sheepherders.

TR: Another team we weren't supposed to beat, but did. You've got an excellent memory, Bill. I remember you were there for some of our matches with them back in our Mid-South and UWF days. Whoa, those were something else!

Q: I can't forget them. I don't think I've ever seen a series of matches that bloody.

BF: Yeah. We beat Luke Williams and Butch Miller for the Mid-South belts over two years ago. Now we come to the NWA, and we see they haven't changed much. I'm sure our paths will cross again. In fact, I hope they do.

TR: Not only will we meet 'em, Bill, I guarantee you we'll beat 'em. They seem to have lost a step over the last couple of years, but we're twice the team we were



then. Each year we've been together, we've gotten bigger, stronger, and more aware of each other's strengths and weaknesses.

Q: You sure seem to have hit a stride since coming to the NWA. Your style against brawlers is effective, but how do you think you'd fare against another scientific team, perhaps Luger and Windham, the current World champions?

BF: Now that would be a great match! I think we'd do well, and it would be a great one to watch, I'm sure. Even though they're bigger than we are, I think our aerial skills would take them out of their game plan. Luger is as strong as a bull, and Windham has proven he can go toe-to-toe with anybody. It would be a heck of a battle, man. They're good wrestlers and fine champions.

TR: Bill, you probably remember that during the spring and summer last

year we wrestled for independent promotions across the country, and also in Puerto Rico in the World Wrestling Council. During that time, we were able to take on some strictly scientific teams, and we came out on top every time. I think it's safe to say we're ready for anything the promoters throw at us.

Q: You two seemed to have been tossed into another bit of a controversy upon arriving in the NWA. You came in just as another high-flying, extremely popular team, The Rock 'n' Roll Express, was leaving. Did you think you were perceived as a "replacement" for Rick Morton and Robert Gibson?

TR: Not by the people I've talked to. I know one of your magazines [the July issue of *The Wrestler*] brought up that same point in one of the articles. But comparing us to Gibson and Morton is silly, although I can see why people do it. It was just a coincidence that we came in as they left, and we really haven't had time to think about anything but that wimp Cornette and his goons.

Q: You have to admit that Cornette's interference has been a big factor in your matches against The Midnight Express so far.

BF: He does have the ability to distract the referee when his men double-team us, and he thinks he's invincible with that loaded tennis racket in his hands. He's come a long way for a geek with no talent, but he'll soon be back home crying on his mother's shoulder.

Q: Obviously, your main goal right now is the U.S. title.

TR: Absolutely. We want to keep pleasing these people, Bill.

BF: Right. Their support is almost like having a third Fantastics member in the ring. We're on cloud nine, but we won't be totally happy until we get rid of Cornette and The Midnight Express. Then it'll be time to *really* celebrate. □

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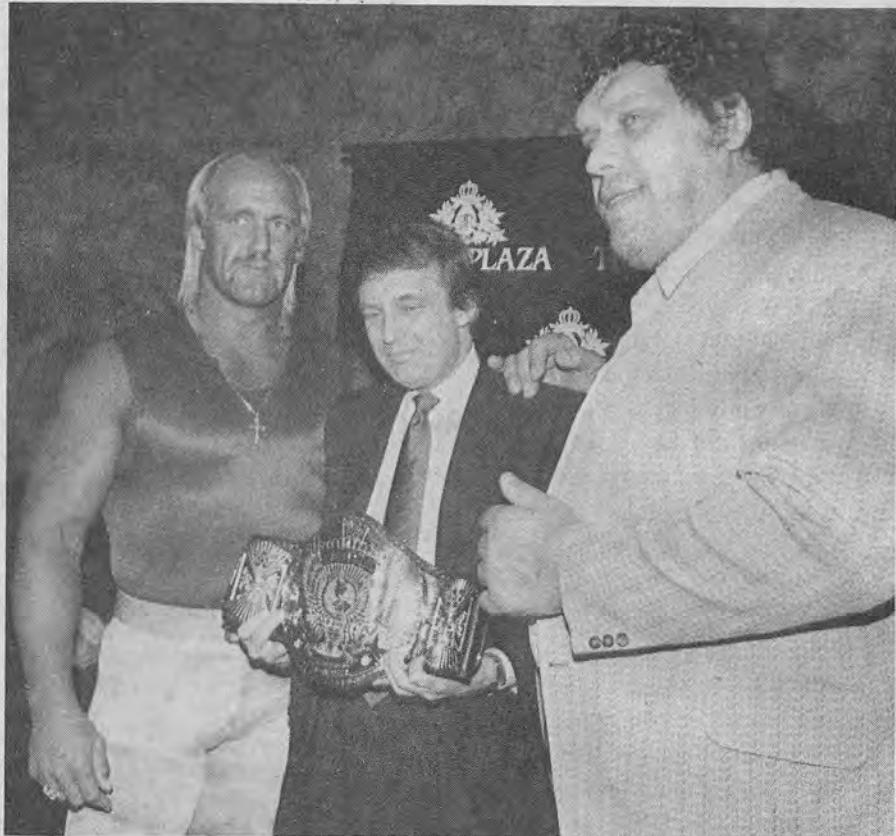
WORLD TITLE

TOURNAMENT!

BACK IN 1963, Buddy Rogers won a tournament for the first WWF World championship shortly after the federation was formed. Twenty-five years later, WrestleMania IV made wrestling history with the WWF's second World title tournament as Randy "Macho Man" Savage was crowned champion before a sellout crowd of over 18,000 at the Atlantic City Convention Center, plus over a million more fans watching live on pay-per-view and closed circuit TV.

The tournament featured 14 of the finest wrestlers in the WWF competing in a single-elimination format under grueling conditions. Savage had to survive four rounds before he could put the belt around his waist. The centerpiece of the tournament was a match between Andre the Giant and Hulk Hogan (the main event at WrestleMania III), whose February 5 brawl led to the title being declared vacant.

But every match was important. Every wrestler put forth a memorable effort, hoping to take advantage of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. The belt was up for grabs. It was anybody's title!



Donald Trump, holding the new WWF World title belt, stands between Hulk Hogan and Andre the Giant prior to the start of the tournament, which was hosted by Trump Plaza.

And *Sports Review Wrestling* was there. Our award-winning team of writers and photographers was dispatched to Atlantic City to provide you with the finest reporting and ac-

tion photography anywhere. On the pages that follow, you'll have a ring-side seat as the tournament unfolds. So sit back, relax, and witness wrestling history in the making.

The WWF World title tournament made WrestleMania IV one of the most anticipated events of all time. In this magnificent special section *Sports Review Wrestling* brings you all the thrills from the Atlantic City Convention Center



FIRST ROUND MATCHES

Ted DiBiase (with Andre the Giant & Virgil) vs. Hacksaw Duggan. Duggan was on the verge of victory in this opening first-round match when he floored DiBiase with a clothesline and went into a three-point stance. But Andre grabbed Duggan's leg, Hacksaw went after him, and DiBiase kneeled Duggan in the back. The "Million-Dollar Man" floored Duggan with a fistdrop and scored the pin at 4:53.

Don Muraco (with Superstar Billy Graham) vs. Dino Bravo (with Frenchy Martin). Both men were exhausted after four minutes of momentum-switching action. A double-clothesline sent Muraco and Bravo sprawling to the mat, but the two musclemen recovered to exchange a series of weak punches. When Muraco attempted a flying forearm, Bravo pulled the ref in front of him. Bravo executed a side suplex and covered Muraco for the pin, but the ref recovered, called for the bell, and disqualified Bravo at 4:54.

Greg Valentine (with Jimmy Hart) vs. Rick Steamboat. Steamboat appeared to be in control when he rammed "The Hammer's" head into the turnbuckle 10 times before the referee got between them to break up an apparent chokehold. Steamboat protested and tossed the ref aside, then climbed to the top rope for a flying bodypress. An exhausted Valentine reversed it, held Steamboat's tights, and covered him for the pin at 9:12.

Randy Savage (with Elizabeth) vs. Butch Reed (with Slick). Reed dominated, but it was Elizabeth who turned the tide of the bout. Reed was on the verge of victory when he reversed Savage's Irish whip and sent him to the mat with a flying clothesline. Reed, however, wasted valuable time talking to Elizabeth. When Reed mounted the top rope, an enraged Savage threw him to the mat. Savage delivered a flying elbow from the top rope and covered Reed for the pin at 5:07.

Hulk Hogan

Andre the Giant

Hacksaw Duggan

Ted DiBiase

Don Muraco

Dino Bravo

Rick Steamboat

Greg Valentine

Randy Savage

Butch Reed

Bam Bam Bigelow

One Man Gang

Jake Roberts

Rick Rude

double-DQ

DiBiase

Muraco

Valentine

Savage

Gang

time-limit draw

WWF World Champion

Randy Savage

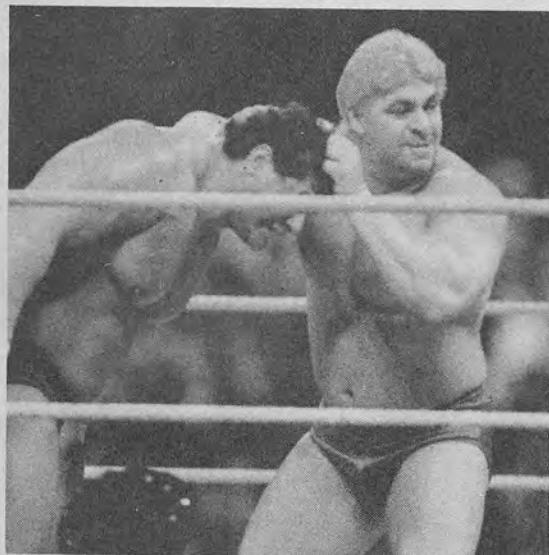


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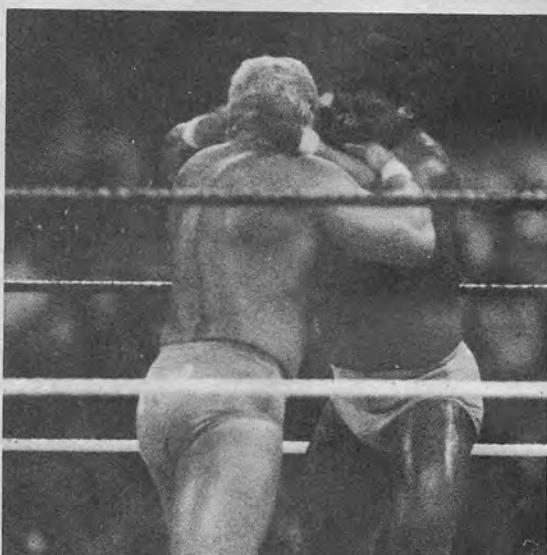
WWF WORLD TITLE TOURNAMENT: ROUND ONE



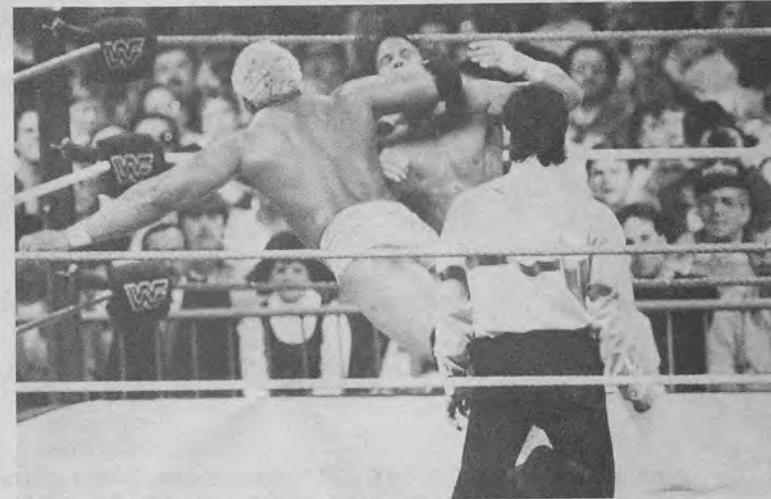
HACKSAW DUGGAN VS. TED DiBIASE: DiBiase lets fly with an elbowsmash (left). Duggan clotheslines the "Million-Dollar Man" (above). The ever-popular Duggan failed to advance.



DINO BRAVO VS.
DON MURACO: Bravo grabs hold of Muraco's hair (left). The two lock up in the center of the ring (right). Bravo's manager, Frenchy Martin, was watched carefully by Superstar Graham, who accompanied "The Rock" and cheered him on to victory.



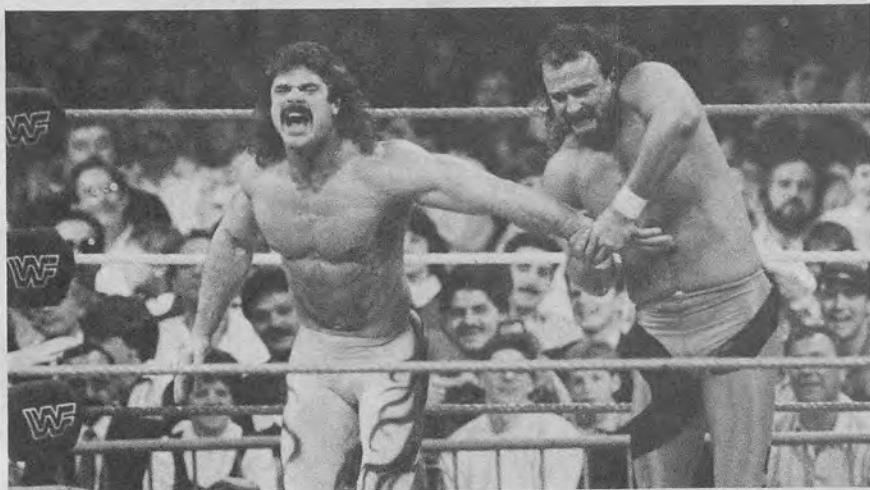
GREG VALENTINE VS. RICK STEAMBOAT: Valentine pulls Steamboat off the ropes by the feet (left). "The Dragon" executes a stunning flying bodypress off the top rope (above).



RANDY SAVAGE VS. BUTCH REED: Savage flips Reed off the top rope (left) and catches a clothesline (above). The "Macho Man" outclassed Reed and his manager Slick on his way to the title.

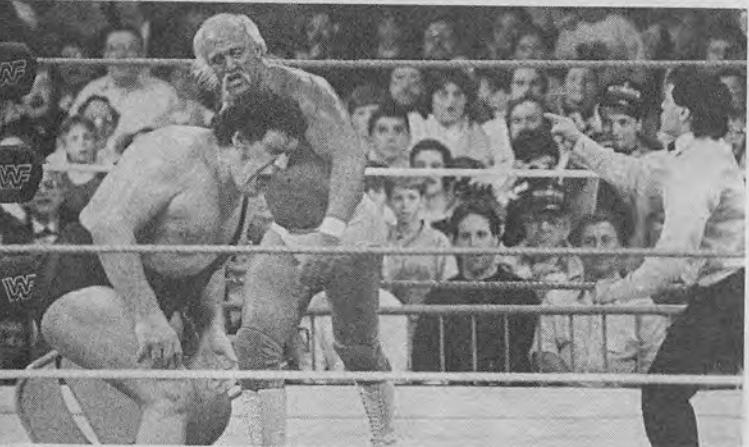


BAM BAM BIGELOW VS. ONE MAN GANG: Bigelow viciously pounds on Gang (left), and Gang returns the favor (above). Gang's victory was considered an upset.

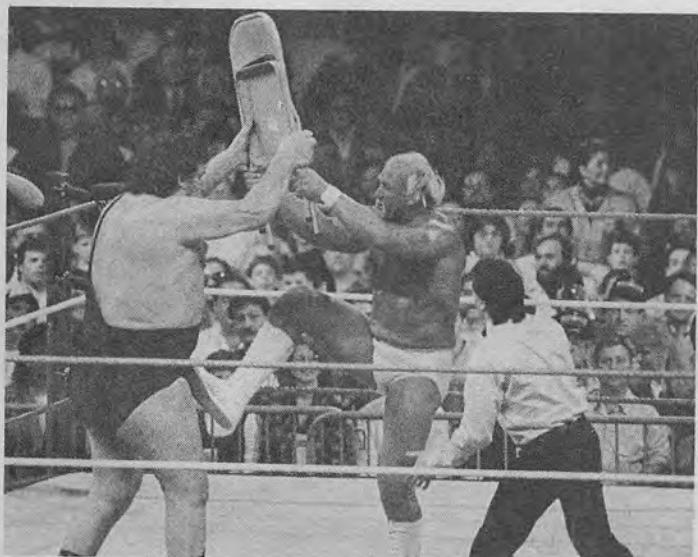
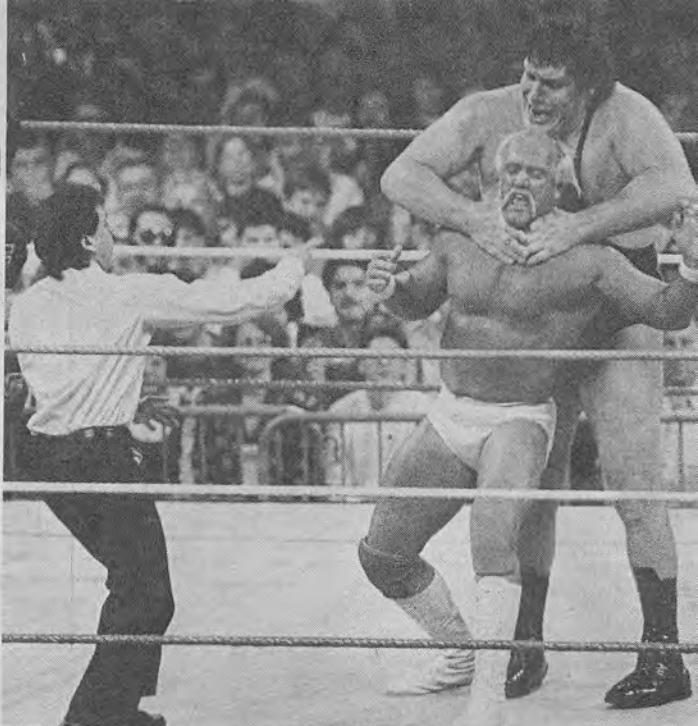


JAKE ROBERTS VS. RICK RUDE: Roberts twists Rude's arm (above) and slams him (right). These were undoubtedly the most evenly matched opponents of the tournament, as it was the only bout to go to a time-limit draw.

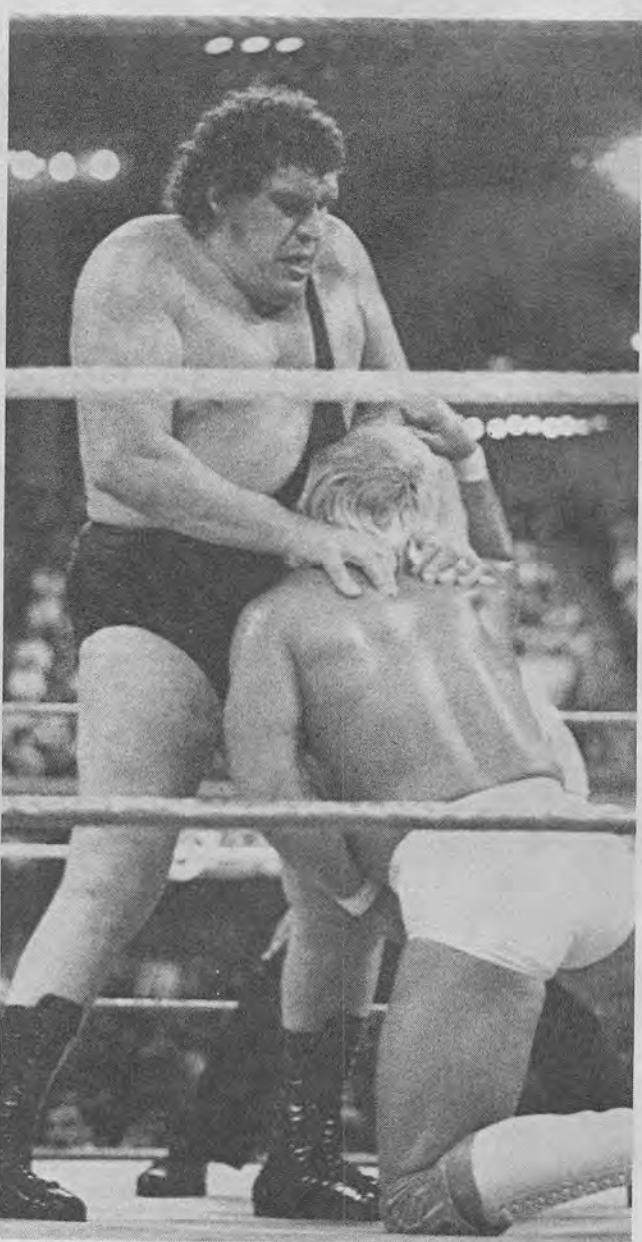
WWF WORLD TITLE TOURNAMENT: ROUND TWO

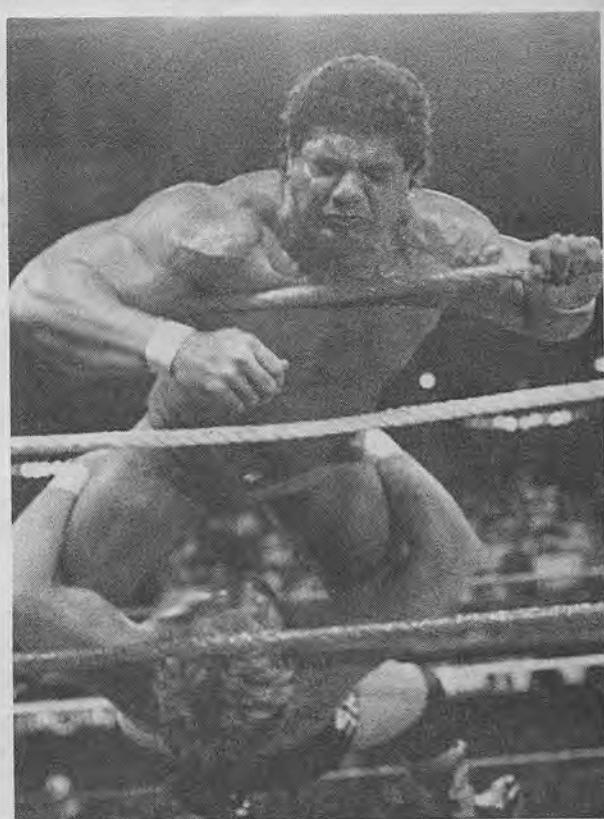
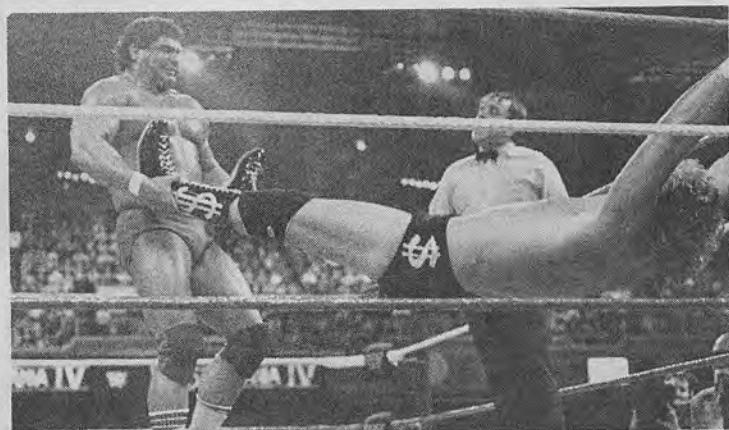


HULK HOGAN VS. ANDRE THE GIANT: Referee Joey Marella orders Hogan to stop hitting Andre with the chair (above), and warns the Giant to stop choking Hogan (right).



Hogan kicks Andre in the gut as they struggle with the chair (above). DiBiase charges in with the chair before Hogan has a chance to slam Andre (below). Andre again chokes the former champion (right).





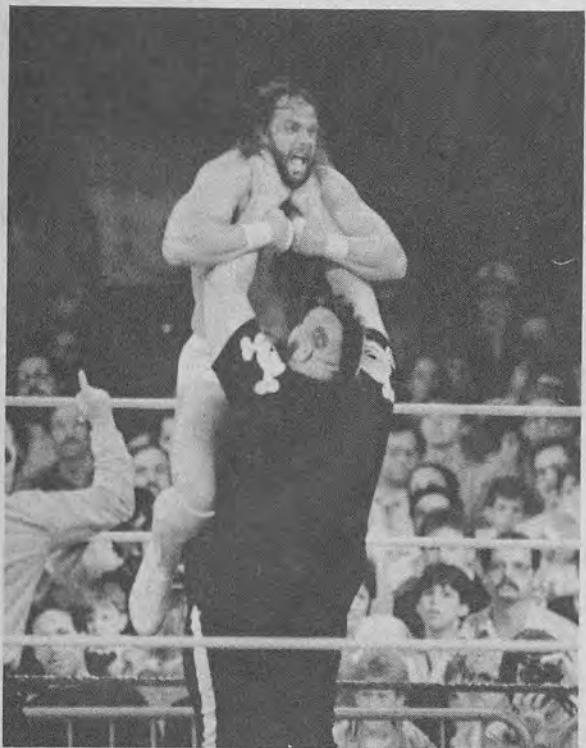
DiBIASE VS. MURACO: Muraco pulls DiBiase off the ropes (top left). Both men run into each other (left). DiBiase clotheslines Muraco with the ropes (above).



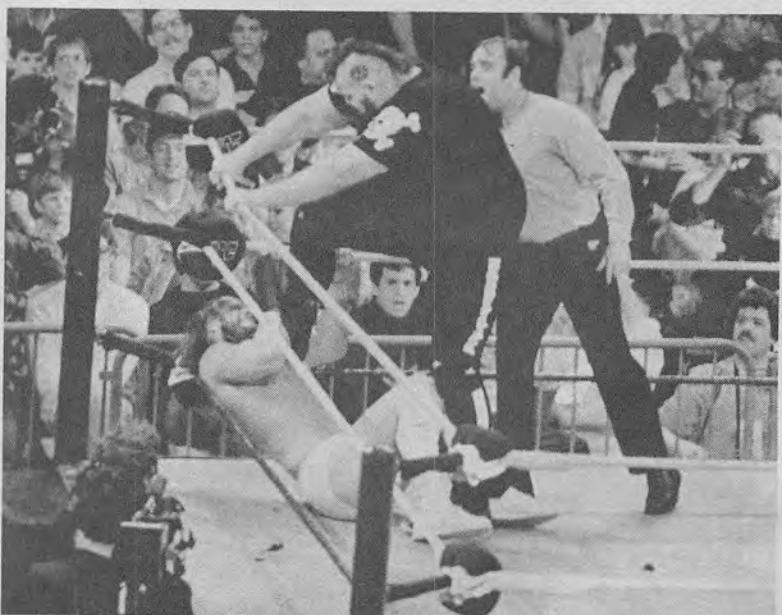
SAVAGE VS. VALENTINE: "The Hammer" supplexes the "Macho Man" (left). Savage scoops Valentine up for a slam (right) and comes down with a flying axhandle (below). This battle between former I-C champs resulted in Valentine's exit from the tourney.



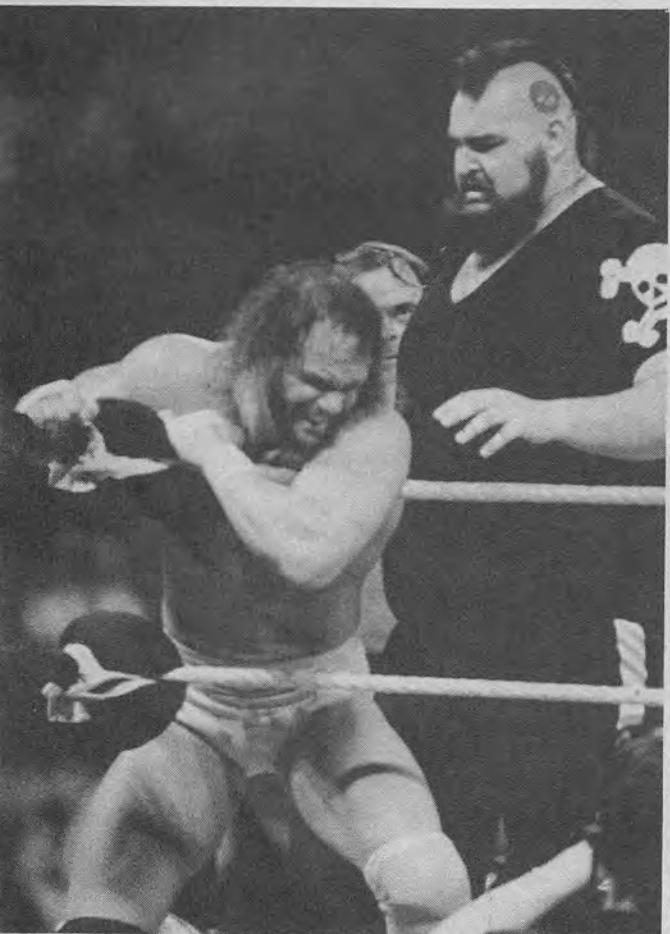
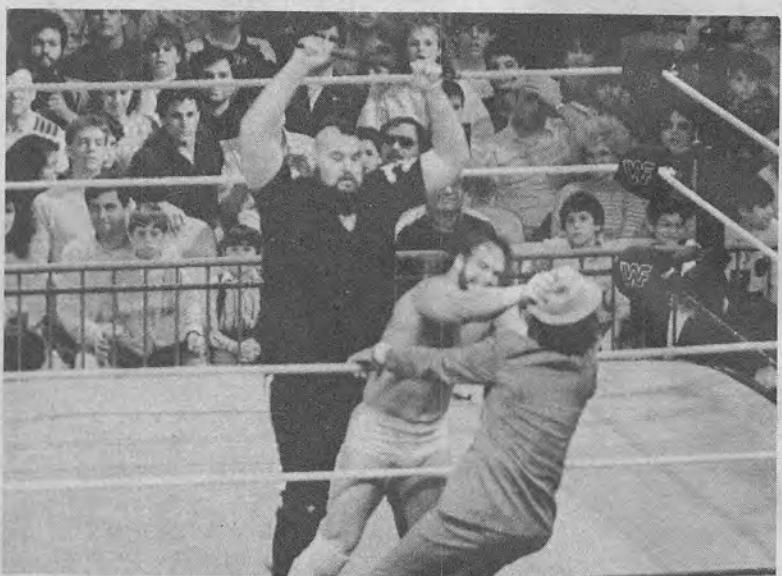
WWF WORLD TITLE TOURNAMENT: SEMIFINAL ROUND



SAVAGE VS. OMG: Gang lifts up Savage with a choke (above) and corners him at the turnbuckle (below). Gang was well rested for this match, having received a bye through the previous round.

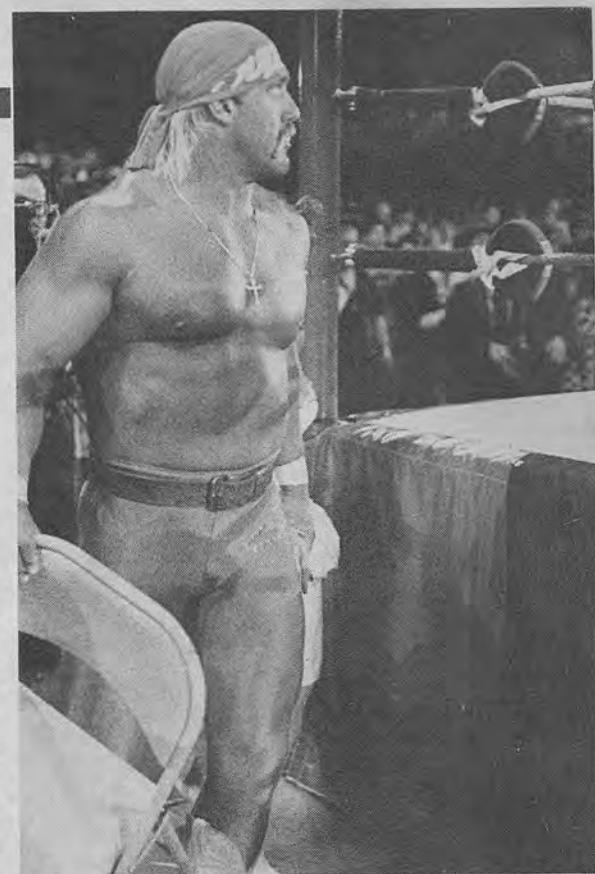
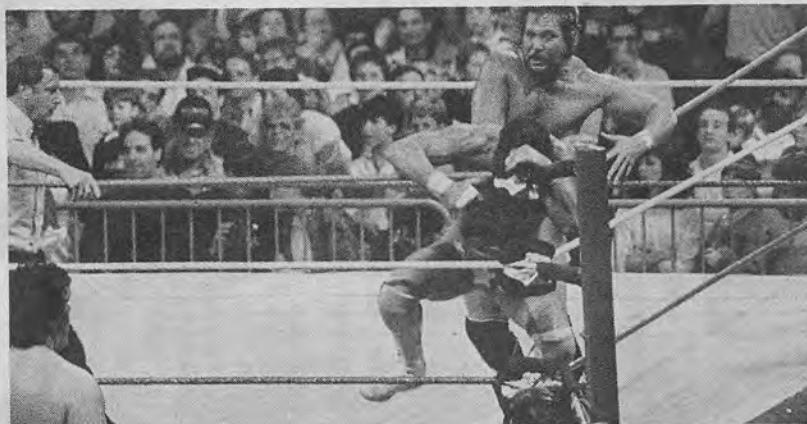


Gang shoves a boot into Savage's throat (above). As Savage attacks Slick, Gang readies an attack of his own ... with Slick's cane (below).

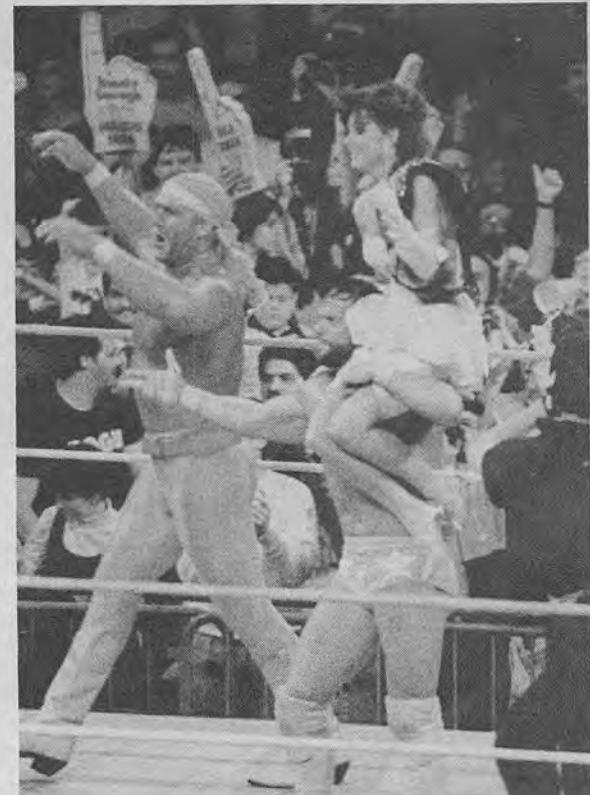


Gang's weapon is rendered useless as Savage gets the pin. Savage's win meant he'd wrestle four matches—more than anyone in the tournament.

WWF WORLD TITLE TOURNAMENT: FINAL MATCH



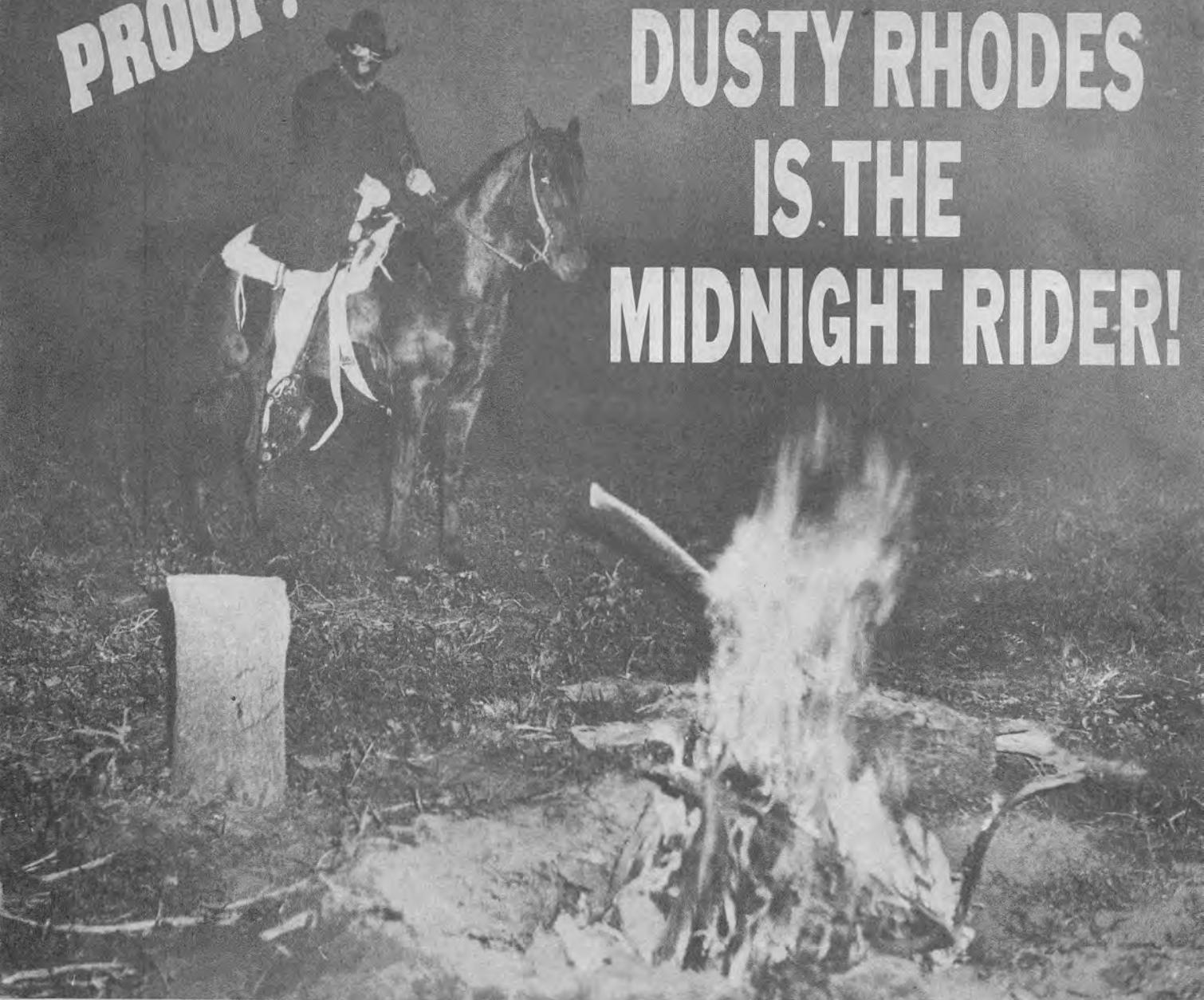
SAVAGE VS. DiBIASE: DiBiase rams Savage's head into the turnbuckle (top left), then Andre interferes (left). Hogan quickly moves to put a stop to that (above).



It appears to be over for Savage, until Hogan makes the save (top left). Savage gets the pin (left). Hogan leads the cheers for the new champion and Elizabeth (above).

PROOF!

DUSTY RHODES IS THE MIDNIGHT RIDER!



Let the record show once and for all: "The American Dream," suspended for three months, has returned to the NWA. In donning the mask of The Midnight Rider, Dusty is trying to pull the wool over his federation's eyes. But look out, Dusty—everybody is on to you!

RIC FLAIR WAS incensed. Dripping sweat after yet another hard title defense, the NWA World champion told reporters his theory regarding The Midnight Rider.

"What you drones in the press corps forget is that I've *wrestled* this so-called 'Midnight Rider.' You guys have only *seen* him. The bionic elbow, the cowboy boots, the fat midsection . . .

it's all unmistakably Dusty Rhodes. And for that, Rhodes should be banned—not just for three months, but forever!"

It doesn't happen very often, but *Sports Review Wrestling* agrees with the World champion. Ric Flair is right. And Dusty Rhodes is playing a very dangerous game.

In the frontier days of the wild

West, when a young cowboy was thrown from his horse, he would quickly climb back on to show he wasn't afraid. Dusty Rhodes knows this philosophy well, for when that horse is the sport of wrestling, and Dusty is thrown from the saddle of competition, "The American Dream" disappears and a masked wrestler known as The Midnight Rider suddenly

ly arrives on the scene.

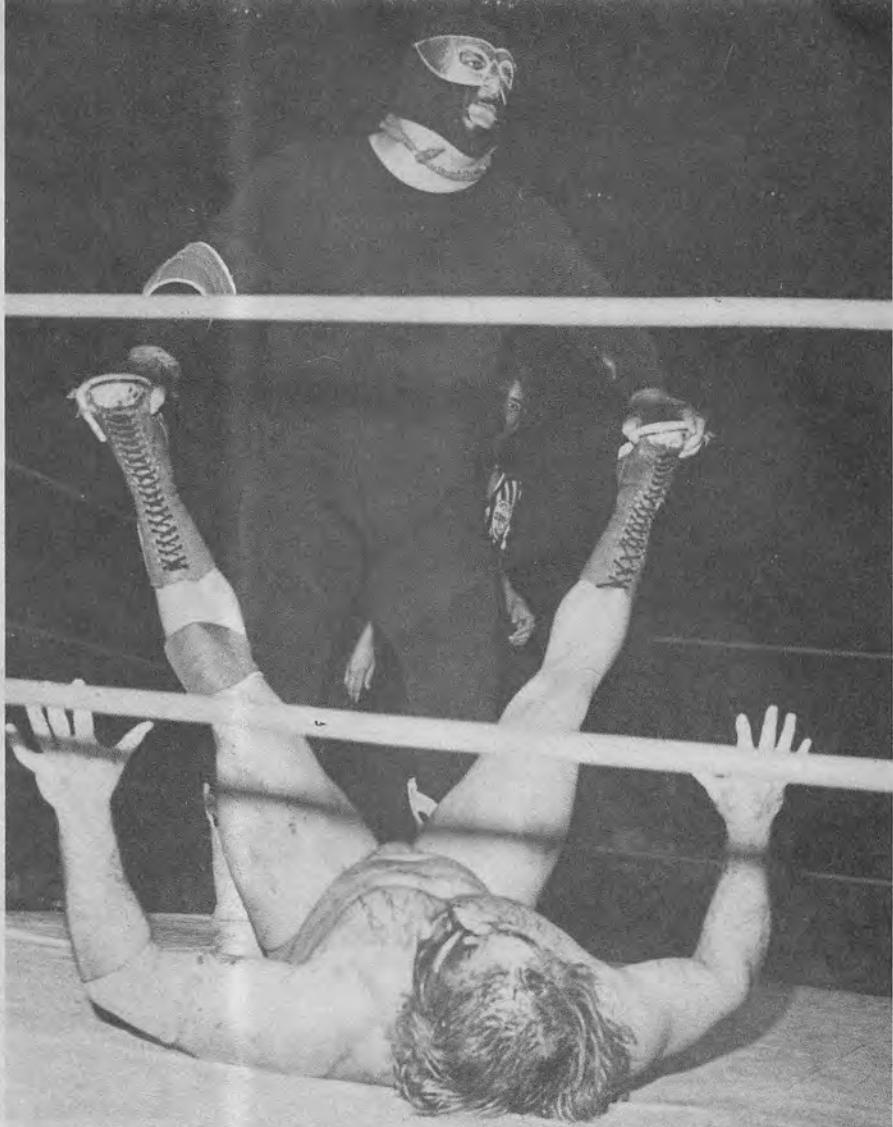
Just coincidence? We wish that were true; it's not.

Rhodes earned his suspension from the NWA when he brutalized Tully Blanchard and NWA President Jim Crockett with a baseball bat. The Rider quickly turned up in Dusty's absence. It's not coincidence, and it's not the first time that Rhodes has openly flaunted his defiance of the NWA rulebook.

Dusty is no stranger to suspensions. Sometimes in this sport, feuds can reach such a level of brutality and bitterness that drastic actions must be taken by an area's officials and commissioners. Such was the case in Florida in early 1983 when Dusty's feud with Kevin Sullivan reached an uncommon height of violence. A loser-leaves-Florida match was deemed necessary, a match that found Rhodes on the losing side. He supposedly left The Sunshine

(Continued on page 46)

During his days in Florida, The Midnight Rider stretches out Kevin Sullivan (right) and pounds on Ric Flair (below). The Rider was—and is—Dusty Rhodes.



Michael Hayes once was a bad boy of wrestling, but now he's changed his ways and befriended the Von Erichs. And although his former Freebird partners Terry "Bamm Bamm" Gordy and Buddy "Jack" Roberts are trying to argue otherwise, Hayes won't follow them down the road to ruin

Michael Hayes Rips The Freebirds Apart:



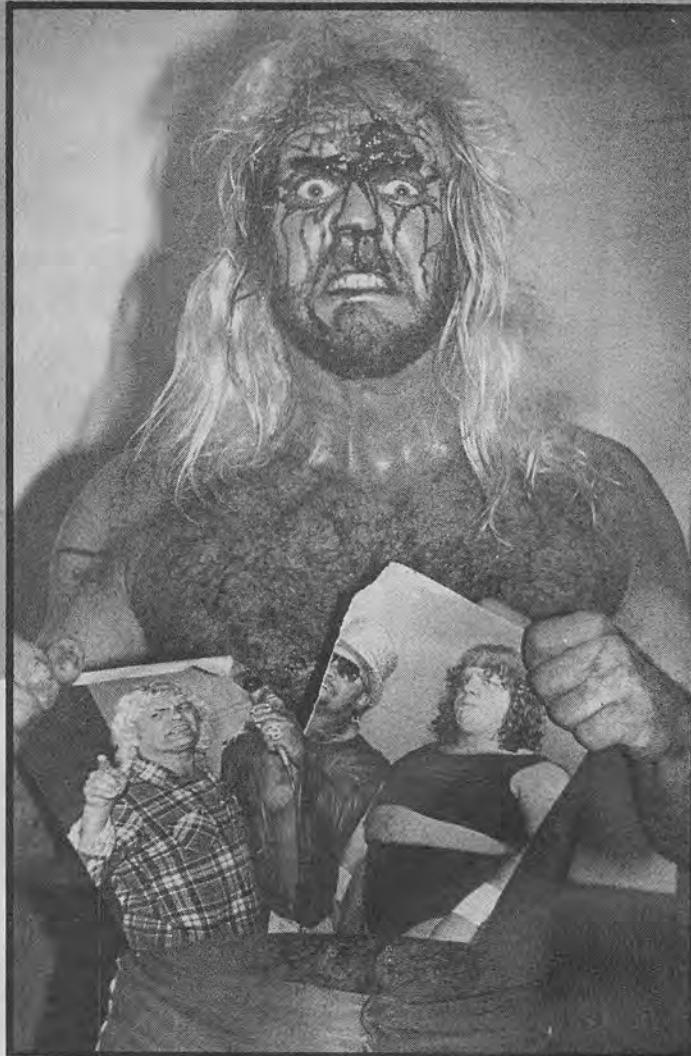
Hayes pounds on his longtime Freebird pal Buddy Roberts. This fight would have been unthinkable only one year ago.

SUNDAY DINNER AT the Von Erich home in Denton, Texas. A peaceful time, far from the maddening and often senseless violence of the wrestling ring, free from the brightness of the TV lights and the intrusion of the fans. The entire family spends a rare few hours together, everybody shares in the preparation of the meal, father Fritz leads the blessing, and news of the past week is shared.

One Sunday in early April, the family had an unusual guest.

"Would you please pass the mashed potatoes, Mrs. Von Erich?" Michael Hayes said to Doris Von Erich. "I ain't had a meal like this in a long time. You know, me, Buddy, and Terry never did much eatin' in. Actually, we all never did much eatin'."

Everybody dropped their forks. Dressed in torn jeans, a "Badstreet U.S.A." T-shirt with the sleeves cut off, a brown leather jacket, and a black



bow tie (for the formal touch), Hayes attracted the family's disapproving attention when he arrived 15 minutes late for dinner. Now, with the mere mention of the other Freebirds, the other faces at the table stared at Hayes in silence.

"Michael, I'm going to have to ask you not to mention their names while we're having dinner," Fritz finally said after a long silence. "After what they've done to me and my family, I don't much care to mix those criminals with my chicken-fried steak. To tell you the truth, Michael, I never thought I'd see the day that you'd be sitting at my dinner table, but in this family we've taught to forgive."

Indeed, Hayes eating dinner with the Von Erichs was a strange sight. Since the early 1980s, the hottest on-again, off-again war in wrestling has been the Von Erichs vs. The Freebirds. Last summer, when Gordy,



Michael Hayes tears a picture of The Freebirds (left), which aptly symbolizes the split among team members. Hayes warns Terry Gordy not to interfere in his match (above).

"THEY'LL GO TO HELL WITHOUT ME!"

Hayes, and Roberts went their separate ways, Hayes teamed with Jim Garvin in the NWA and quickly became a fan favorite. In December, Gordy and Roberts resurfaced in the World Class area and resumed their feud with the Von Erichs. On Christmas Day, Gordy, Roberts, Iceman Parsons, and Angel of Death, brutally attacked Fritz prior to Kerry's match against Al Perez.

In mid-February, Hayes returned to Texas and told Gordy and Roberts that while he didn't mind Parsons, he didn't like them associating with Angel of Death. But everything fell apart during Hayes' March 4 concert in Dallas with his Badstreet Band. When Hayes invited Kerry and Kevin on stage, Roberts and Parsons rushed onto the scene. Hayes was caught in the middle of a four-way brawl. Roberts picked up a guitar and swung it at Kerry. Roberts missed, however, and struck Hayes, who had to be helped off the stage.

The injury forced Hayes to miss his match the next night against World Class heavyweight champion Al Perez. Kerry substituted for Hayes and won the belt, and the stage was set for an all-out war. Roberts insisted that he made a mistake, but Hayes wouldn't accept his apology. "He was probably drunk," Hayes said. "I've had enough of his games."

A series of unusual incidents followed. On March 25 in Dallas, Hayes wrestled Roberts; Gordy tried to break up the match. "This match should never have happened," said Gordy, who explained that Angel of Death's contract had been sold to Vince Apollo. "The Freebirds can get back together again," Gordy insisted.

That wasn't to be the case. Later in the evening, Kerry defended his title against Parsons. Black Bart was at ringside for Parsons, so Hayes came to

(Continued on page 52)



Roberts receives a stern warning from Hayes: Get your act together or else. But Roberts is unlikely to listen—nor care.

For The Good Of The Fans ...

MIDNIGHT ROCKERS & ROCK 'N' ROLL EXPRESS



MAKE PEACE NOW!

Fans of The Midnight Rockers and The Rock 'n' Roll Express were stunned a few months back when the teams waged war in an unforgettable series of matches in the CWA. Both teams are now in the AWA, and fans are hoping they'll focus their attention on World champs Paul Diamond and Pat Tanaka—instead of each other!

THEY SAY IT'S never too late to forgive and forget. Although professional wrestling features some of the most volatile egos found in any sport, attitudes, like titles, can change in an instant. Hopefully, the savage feud between The Midnight Rockers and The Rock 'n' Roll Express has ended. Unfortunately, neither team seems to want it to be.

Their war began in March, when the Rockers—Shaun Michaels and Marty Jannetty—stood tall as AWA World tag team champions. The Express—Robert Gibson and Rick Morton—had decided to pack their bags and leave the NWA in hopes of finding new titles and more varied competition.

Nobody expected the explosion that followed.

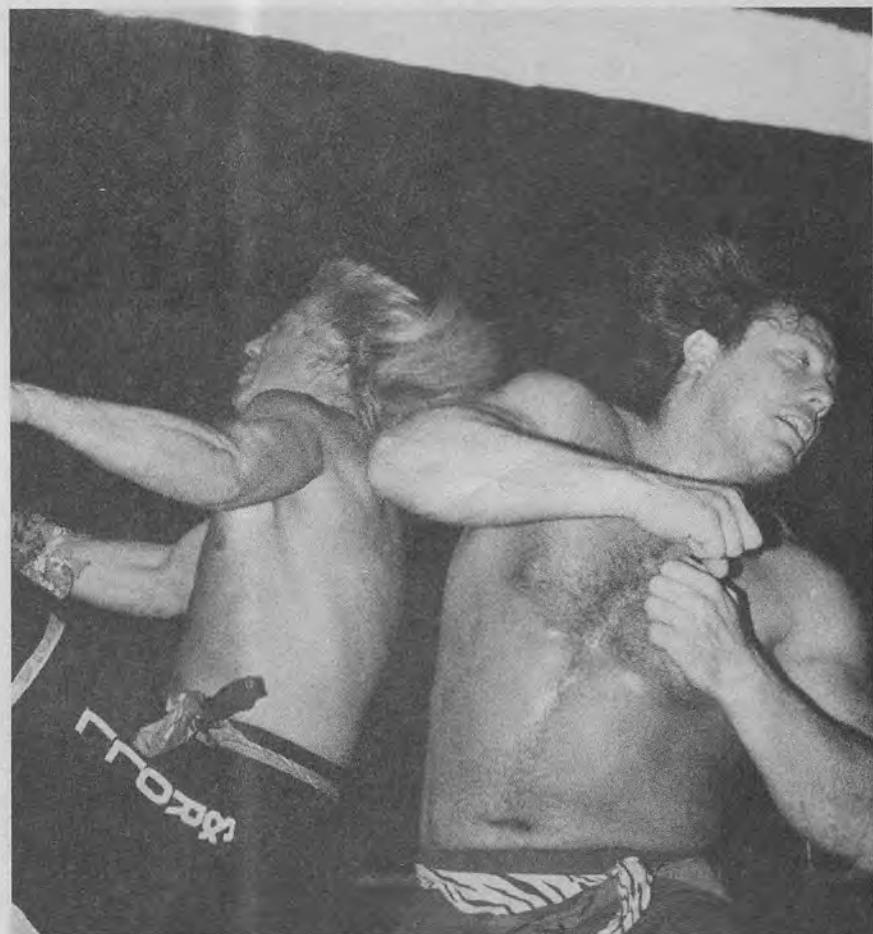
The Rockers began to compete in the CWA on a regular basis, although they were not loved by the fans as they had been in the AWA. The popular Morton and Gibson arrived in Memphis soon thereafter; they weren't happy with Michaels and Jannetty, either. The Express claimed the Rockers had copied their free-spirited style.

"They're just a cheap imitation of us," said Morton. "In this case, imitation is *not* a form of flattery, it's a damn insult."

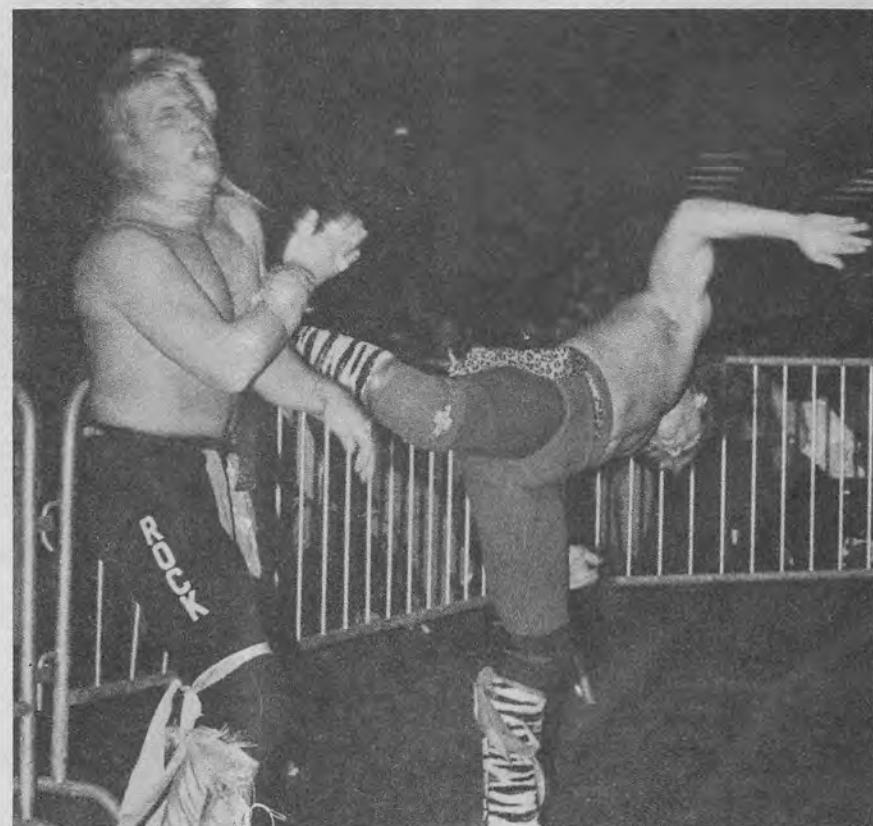
Jannetty and Michaels, already hated in Memphis, angered CWA fans even more by writing off the Express as has-beens. "We're the World champs, not those old-timers," said Michaels. "If they want a match against us, they'd better be prepared to fight it out like never before."

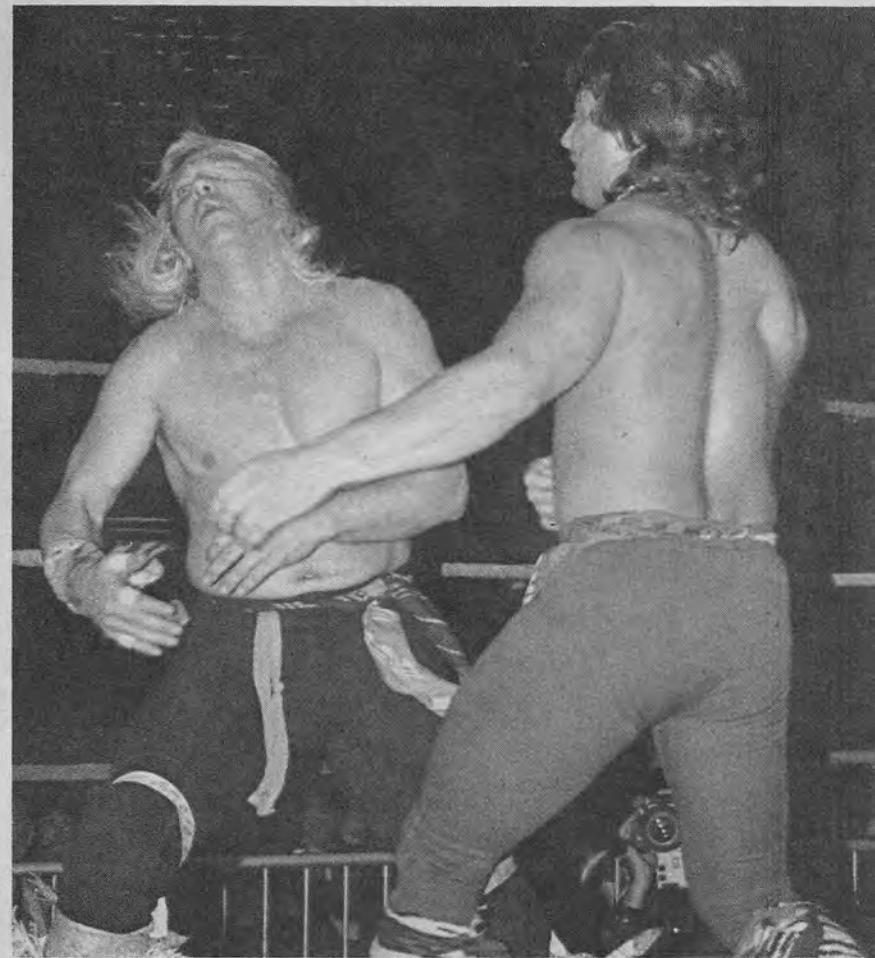
The verbal battle quickly escalated into an incredibly vicious series of matches. These are two high-flying, athletic teams, but they spent most of the time trying to tear each other to bloody ruins. The wrestling world was shocked at the sheer brutality displayed in these bouts. When the battles were over, all four vowed to someday settle the score.

The feud ended—unsettled—when the Rockers felt it was time to travel

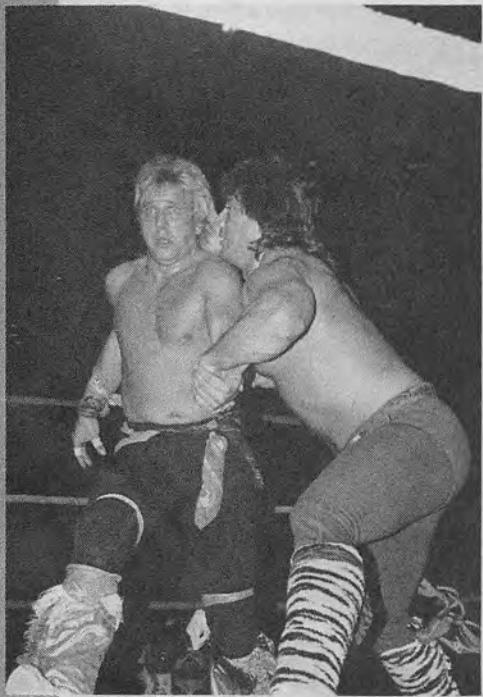
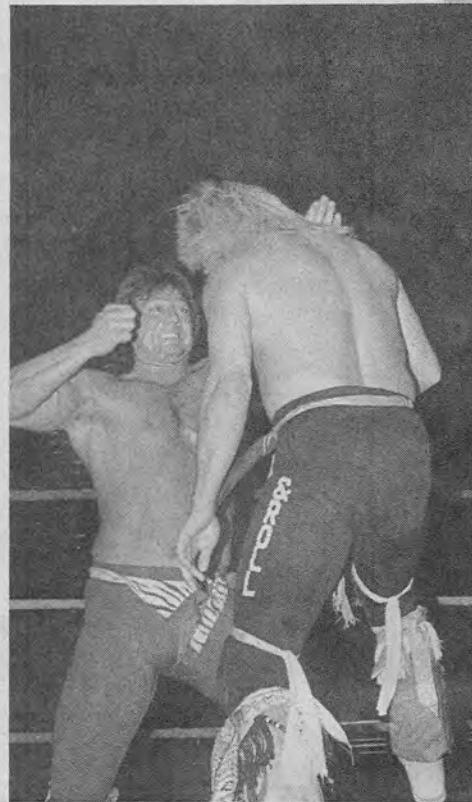


Marty Jannetty elbowsmashes Rick Morton (above) and hits him with a vicious sidekick (below). Anyone expecting a graceful, scientific contest between The Midnight Rockers and The Rock 'n' Roll Express doesn't realize how much these teams hate each other.

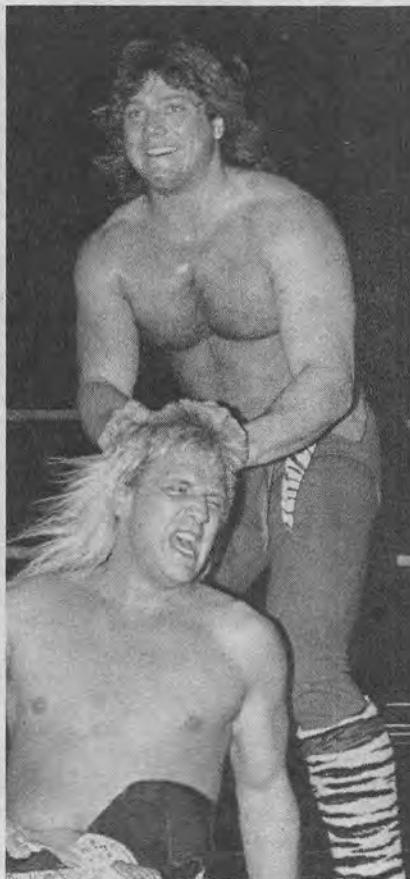




Jannetty punches Morton around the ring (left and below). The Express sees the Rockers as a copycat team, and a bad one at that.



Jannetty whips Morton across the ring (above) and keeps him down on the mat (right). The Rockers say the Express had nothing to do with them losing the AWA tag team title to Bad Company.



again. Jannetty and Michaels returned to the AWA and lost the tag title to Bad Company—Paul Diamond and Pat Tanaka. Critics' explanations for the title loss have pointed to the battles with Morton and Gibson as having taken a big toll on the Rockers.

"That's bull," said Jannetty. "We lost the belts because of a distracted referee and an illegal double-team. Don't give the Express credit for anything."

Meanwhile, Gibson and Morton added to their popularity by winning the World Organization Wrestling tag team title. They then took a trip to Puerto Rico to compete in the World Wrestling Council. Their next stop: the AWA.

"Now we want *this* World tag title," said Morton at a press conference announcing their arrival in the federation. "These fans have been deprived of a real team to root for for too long. We're in a belt-collecting frenzy, baby."

(Continued on page 50)

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MAILBAG

(Continued from page 6)



A battle royal opened WrestleMania IV, which was not Kurt Hirsch's favorite card.

WrestleMania IV; certainly nothing that even comes close to matching the Savage-Rick Steamboat Intercontinental title bout at WrestleMania III. The Savage-Ted DiBiase tournament final was hardly a classic, particularly with Hogan running in the ring with a chair. That's not wrestling by any stretch of the imagination. In fact, I was mad at Hogan for his interference (talk about a sore loser!).

I was sorry I paid \$20 to see the event at home on television. Needless to say, I'm not all that excited by the prospects for WrestleMania V.

KURT HIRSCH
Providence, RI

BURN GILBERT!

I think severe punishment should be inflicted on Eddie Gilbert. I say this because of his repeated use of fire. His feud with Jerry Lawler in Memphis has reached a level of brutality that is so far over the line of decency that it's disgusting.

In 1983, when Kevin Sullivan began setting new standards for evil in his feud with Dusty Rhodes, Florida area officials forced a loser-leave-Florida match. Rhodes lost and moved on, and while the Florida fans were deprived of seeing "The American Dream" in action, at least the hatred that caused the evil was diffused.

The same thing must happen where Gilbert is concerned. His is the type of cold-blooded savagery that turns the mat sport into licensed destruction.

When I go to wrestling, I want to

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see fierce competition, not the cowardly use of foreign—and in this case, flaming—objects. Stop Eddie Gilbert!

DAVID SHAW
Memphis

WHO'S THE ANIMAL NOW?

Disgusting. That's the only word I can use to describe the mayhem going on as The Warlord and The Barbarian try to destroy Road Warrior Animal. While I'm not surprised by such brutality, I still could not believe that Warlord and Barbarian could be so vicious that they would employ a steel chain against Animal's wounded eye at the March 27 Clash of the Champions in Greensboro, North Carolina.



The Powers of Pain smash Road Warrior Animal with a chain. Reader Anne-Laure Rocher despises Warlord and Barbarian.

What bothered me most was that Warlord and Barbarian were *determined* to re-injure Animal's eye! I don't expect sportsmanship out of those cretins, but one would think that true mat soldiers would have respect for the fact that Animal's brave return to the ring went against all laws of medicine and common sense.

In meeting such bravery with sadism, Warlord and Barbarian proved that there are absolutely no virtuous bones in their ugly bodies.

ANNE-LAURE ROCHER
E. Sandwich, MA

ROCKING AND ROLLING

I, for one, am ecstatic that The Rock 'n' Roll Express are now in the

(Continued on page 44)

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MAILBAG

(Continued from page 43)

AWA and going after Bad Company's World title belts. I have no doubt that after just a few matches against Pat Tanaka and Paul Diamond, Rick Morton and Robert Gibson will have those belts strapped around their waists.

My high opinion of the Rock 'n' Rolls comes from their wide experience in the sport. They've been together about five years and have held the NWA World title four times. Can Bad Company make a similar claim? Morton and Gibson excel in their aerial skills, and they're superb scientific wrestlers. Can Bad Company make a similar claim?

Look for The Rock 'n' Roll Express to steamroll right over the AWA champions!

DAN STEMMONS

Minneapolis

SOME GOOD P.R.

How come your otherwise fine magazine never really writes anything about Puerto Rican wrestling? You ought to see the action down here! And now that we've got Danny Spivey from the WWF, our cards are sure to be the best available to the wrestling fan.

Hercules Ayala is a superb champion. He owns the Caribbean title, and he successfully dethroned Carlos Colon for the WWC Universal belt. Ayala is a veteran who never backs down. Many people have tried to beat Colon,



Hercules Ayala is both the Universal and Caribbean champion in Puerto Rico.

but Ayala is the only one who was successful in that quest.

Sure, Colon is the most beloved man in the history of Puerto Rican wrestling, but his recent behavior proves that he is undeserving of the love of the fans that is constantly showered upon him. In recent months, we've seen a different Carlos Colon. He has been brutal in his attacks on Ayala, often refusing to release dangerous leg holds even when Ayala is on the ropes. That's not the sportsman I grew up watching.

Colon had better face facts: None of the titles he seeks will be easy to reclaim. Ayala is a strong champion, a fine wrestler, and further proof that Puerto Rico is the place to go for the best action!

Come on, *Sports Review Wrestling*, let's see some coverage of the WWC!

ANGELINA SAO PAULO

Bayamon, PR □

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 July 1980/Bruno-Graham, Samoans, Star Wars 1980.
 October 1980/Hogan, Flair, Wrestling II, Super D.
 January 1981/Morales-Fuji, Zbyszko, Thornton, Keirn.
 April 1981/Atlas, Flair, Moondogs, Wrestling II.
 June 1981/Morales-Khan, Lawler, Slater, Piper.
 September 1981/Backlund-Mosca, Freebirds, Flair, Rich, Junkyard Dog.



October 1981/Rich-Race, Hogan-Hansen, Moondogs, Freebirds, Potski-Koloff.
 November 1981/Rhodes-DiBlase, Steamboat, Mulligan, McDaniel, Spoiler.
 December 1981/Muraco-Morales, Patera, Steele, Andre.
 March 1982/Valentine, Brisco-Funk, Steele, Flair, Hayes.
 April 1982/Spoiler, Idol-Hayes, Morales, Super D. Ladd.

May 1982/Rich-Flair, Backlund, Superstar, Dillon, Wrestling II.
 June 1982/Tommy Rich, Jimmy Snuka, Wrestlers rate each other.
 July 1982/Steamboat-Idol, Albano, Rhodes, Patera.
 August 1982/Piper-Rich, Flair-Slater, Rhodes, Valentine, Bockwinkel.
 October 1982/Funk-Abdullah, Orton, Kabuki, Von Erich.
 November 1982/Piper, Abdullah, Saito, Von Erich, Mascaras.
 December 1982/Backlund-Rose, Rhodes-Flair, Albano, Humperdink.
 January 1983/Rich, McDaniel-Valentine, Patera, Brisco, Bockwinkel.
 February 1983/Flair-Race, Morales-Rose, Patera, Bravo, Spoiler.
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 May 1983/Muraco, Dillon, Sullivan, Reed, Brisco, Von Erich.
 June 1983/Piper, Bockwinkel-Patterson, Brody, Sullivan, Baba.
 July 1983/Vallant-Humperdink, Martel, Hernandez, Murdoch, Armstrong.
 October 1983/Martel-Valentine, Mulligan, Lawler, Von Erichs, Bruno.
 November 1983/Andre-Mulligan, Kamala-Brody, Slater, Backlund.
 December 1983/Windham-LeDuc, Santana, Sullivan, Garvin.
 January 1984/Andre-Abdullah, Bockwinkel, Gilbert, Windham, Flair, Mosca.
 February 1984/Rich-Sawyer, Idol-Hansen, Martel, Parsons, Von Erich.
 March 1984/Starcade '83, Closeups on Atlanta and Dallas cards.
 April 1984/Von Erich-Gordy, Dillon & Nagasaki, Graham, DiBiase, Orndorf. May 1984/LeDuc-Sawyer, Assassins, The Men Who Make Wrestling Fly!
 June 1984/Windham-Flair, Gilbert, Sawyer, Bockwinkel, Tsuruta.
 July 1984/Flair-Gordy, Duggan, Blanchard, Brisco, AWA tag tourney.
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 October 1986/Orndorf, Rude-Brody, Bash, Bockwinkel, Gordy, Adams.
 November 1986/Andersons-R&R Express, Machine, Gordy, Managers.
 December 1986/Machines, Fantastics, Warriors, WWF Muchnick Tourney.
 January 1987/Russians, Hyatt-Dark Journey, WWF Top 50, Fan Ones.
 February 1987/Road Warriors, Savage, Windham & Lugar, 1987 Datebook.
 March 1987/Kamala-Hogan, Starrcade '86, Atlas, Williams, Tatum.
 April 1987/1986 In Pictures, Kevin Von, Flair, Rich, Hennig-Bockwinkel.
 May 1987/Nikita-Flair, Bulldogs, Albano's career, Snuka-DeBeers, Taylor.
 June 1987/Hogan-Andre, Hall, Parsons, Garvin, WWF title history.
 July 1987/Midnight Express, Savage-Steambat, Adams, NWA in Boston.
 August 1987/Nord-Kevin, Armstrong-Flair, Hogan & Patera, Crockett Cup.
 September 1987/Hogan, Akbar, Luger-Nikita, Summer Feuds, charity shows.
 October 1987/Windham, Bigelow, Bockwinkel, Western States tourney.
 November 1987/Bash, Honky Tonk, Hart, Shepherds, Condrey.
 December 1987/Grappling Ghouls, Hogan-Andre, Luger-Nikita, Boesch card
 January 1988/Honky Tonk, Garvin, T.A. career, Arcidi, Hogan.
 February 1988/Rhodes, Strike Force, Rich-Adonis, Hyatt, 1988 datebook.
 March 1988/Starcade, Survivor Series, Simpson, Hennig, Zbysko.
 April 1988/1987 In Pictures, Tully & Arn, DiBiase, Kerry, Orton.
 May 1988/Hawk-Flair, Andre-Hogan, Dangerously, Duggan, Mike George.
 June 1988/Luger-Tully, DiBiase, Adams, NWA New York invasion.

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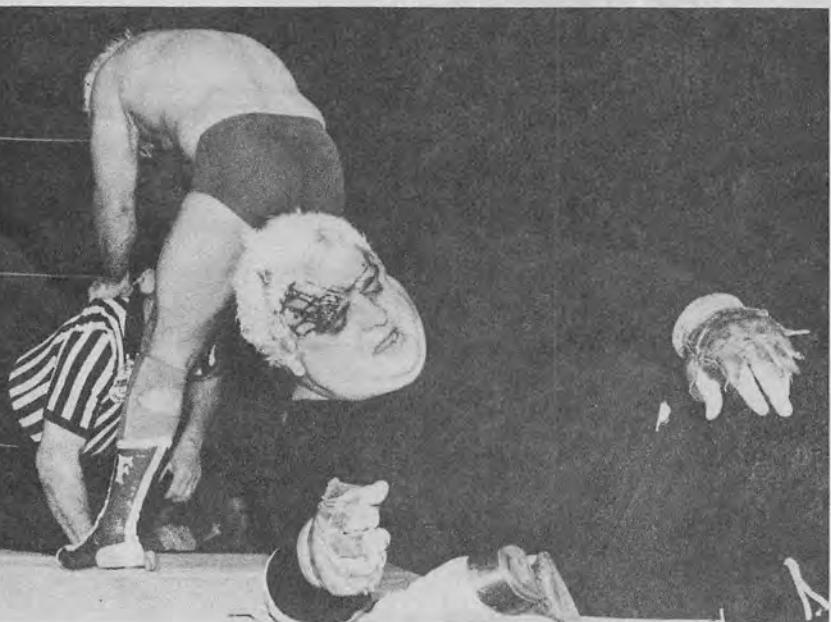
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MIDNIGHT RIDER

(Continued from page 35)



Flair leaps over the Rider during their NWA World title match in 1983 (above). The mask is off, but Flair can't get the referee to see Dusty's face (below).



State for Houston and a 60-day vacation.

But days later, a masked avenger known as The Midnight Rider arrived in Florida to renew hostilities against Sullivan. Both Sullivan and his then-manager, J.J. Dillon, were convinced that Rhodes was the Rider. Although Dusty still denies that he ever was (or now is) the Rider, Dillon remains convinced.

"Just look at their builds!" Dillon exclaimed. "If there is anybody in the world a mask is not going to disguise, it's Dusty Rhodes. And then there's his moves. Have you ever seen the Rider execute the bionic elbow? And do you think it's just a *coincidence* that the Rider and Dusty have the same bootmaker? The same thing is happening now as happened back in '83. Dusty, who supposedly is such a fair and sportsmanlike man, is openly flaunting the rulebook!"

Dillon refers to a clause in the NWA rules that says a masked wrestler who is thought to be a wrestler under suspension "must be unmasked before a competent and recognized NWA official, either a referee, promoter, or the NWA President." Pending such positive proof of a suspended wrestler's illegal competition, the masked wrestler is allowed to compete.

"The Four Horsemen *will* unmask the Rider," Dillon claims. "There's no way Dusty's going to get away with this. And there won't be another title fiasco, I guarantee you that."

The incident Dillon calls a "fiasco" is the stuff of wrestling legend. The Midnight Rider, victorious in a February 1983 World title match with Ric Flair, was given a unique postmatch choice: remove the mask or forfeit the belt. After lengthy agonizing over the decision, the Rider knew he had to forfeit the belt; exposing his identity would have given the Florida commission no choice but to inflict stern sanctions.

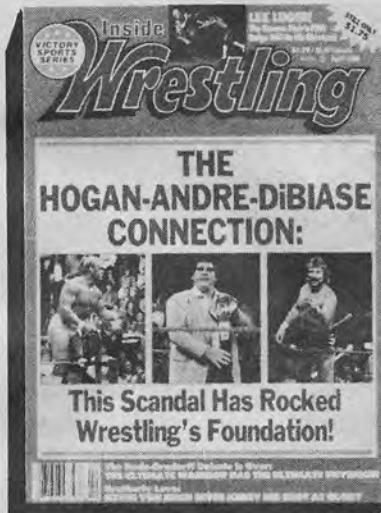
But during that match with Flair,
(Continued on page 48)

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MIDNIGHT RIDER

(Continued from page 46)



The Midnight Rider is chinlocked by another Rider, who turned out to be Kharma, managed by Kevin Sullivan. If Dusty isn't careful, his ploy could backfire on him again. A lot more people are watching this time.

the Rider repeatedly removed his mask for the fans in a foolhardy display of rule-defying bravado—revealing to all the familiar face of Dusty Rhodes. Of course, Dusty only removed the mask when the referee's back was conveniently turned. Dillon remembers that night well.

"It was absurd! There was Dusty taking off the mask four or five times while the referee was distracted. But the fans saw it, I saw it, Flair saw it, everybody saw it! Everybody except the damn fool referee, who, according to the fool rulebook, had to see it in order to punish Rhodes. The hell with loopholes in the rules, what more proof does anyone need? And the same thing is happening again today! Everyone knows it, just like back then!"

Of course, Rhodes denies any wrongdoing, claiming that the Rider is just a close friend who helps him out in tough situations.

"The Rider, daddy, he's a man of action," Rhodes said. "He's a man of honor, and he's not afraid of stepping in and helping out 'The Dream,' you know. I may be sidelined, but I have the Rider right there for me, fighting the fight, and doing what's right."

"I give the Rider a lot of credit," says Magnum T.A., who is close friends with Dusty. "Here's a guy who is putting it all on the line to win Dusty's revenge for him against Dillon. How can I *not* support the man who is standing by Dusty when Dusty has stood by me so faithfully?"

T.A. misses the point—or he's obscuring the truth. There is no Dusty and the Rider, there is only Dusty, for Dusty is the Rider. We know it, Dillon knows it, the fans know it, and the NWA knows it. That the NWA is afraid to take positive action against Rhodes is a blatant example of its own legislative weakness. But action *must* be taken.

Dusty's flaunting of the rulebook in the faces of fans, NWA officials, and everyone who claims that fair play is the only way to play simply cannot be allowed to continue. □

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EXPRESS/ROCKERS

(Continued from page 40)

When Michaels and Jannetty were informed that the Express had signed to wrestle in the AWA, their comments were a virtual declaration of war.

"Man, just what we need," Jannetty said with a sarcastic laugh. "Time to go into our half-court mode again. It's like playing in an old-timer's game." His partner didn't take the news so lightly.

"These guys have no reason to be here," said an obviously perturbed Michaels. "Why are they coming to our home turf? Are they so old that they enjoy getting trounced? This time, we'll finish 'em off for good."

Gibson and Morton made their initial AWA appearance before an enthusiastic throng at the Showboat Sports Pavilion in Las Vegas. It was clear from their comments afterward that they weren't prepared to let anything deter them from the AWA tag title.

"It's not a question of whether we want to fight them or not," said Gibson, trying his best to sound diplomatic. "It's a question of what we have to do. We didn't come here just to fight The Midnight Rockers, but if they're in the path of our next title, we're gonna have to go out and beat 'em."

"And we will beat 'em," emphasized Morton. "They're supposed to be sportsmen, but in our CWA matches they broke rules so much it was like wrestling Tully Blanchard and Arn Anderson again. They're gonna get what they deserve, because they need to learn a serious lesson in life."



Shawn Michaels pushes Morton into the ropes as Jannetty comes over to make it a double-team.

What the Rockers and the Express are forgetting in this war of words is that they are both *popular* tag teams. Both profess their love for the fans—and the feeling is usually returned—but battling each other again would prove little. These two evenly matched teams would be better off concentrating on defeating Bad Company and The Nasty Boys, who currently dominate the AWA tag scene.

"It's tough enough to find wrestlers to root for," said Anne Maurer, who attends every Showboat card. "I loved Tommy Rich and Tom Zenk, but they're not around anymore. Now



Morton leglocks Michaels in the CWA. Being that the Rockers are favorites in the AWA, it should be interesting to track this feud.

we've got two of the most exciting teams anywhere, the Rockers and the Express, but they're threatening to kill each other. Why can't they concentrate on driving scum like Bad Company and Curt Hennig out of wrestling? Beating on each other would be a *big* mistake. They'll lose all their loyal fans, including me."

That's the *last* thing these teams need. The Express and the Rockers have everything to lose in a feud with each other. But if they combined forces, the positive impact they would have on AWA wrestling would be staggering.

There's still time for the teams to resolve their differences without a war. The winner of a second Express-Rockers series is hard to predict, but it's clear that the fans would emerge as the real losers. □

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MICHAEL HAYES

(Continued from page 37)



World Class champion Iceman Parsons chokes Hayes with electrical wire. Parsons won the belt from Kerry Von Erich after a bizarre incident, also involving Hayes.

ringside for Kerry to even things up. Gordy and Roberts then came out of a side door. When Gordy looked up toward the balcony, all the lights in the building went out. When the lights came back on, Hayes was lying on the floor in a pool of his own blood, Kerry was unconscious on the mat, and Bart, Gordy, and Roberts were gone. Parsons covered Kerry for the win and the belt.

That solidified the Von Erich-Hayes alliance. Since then, Kerry and Hayes have teamed against several combinations of Gordy, Roberts, Parsons, and The Angel of Death (who has remained an ally of The Freebirds). Although history dictates that the combination is potentially volatile, Hayes' and Kerry's friendship appears strong.

“People are remembering the old Michael Hayes,” Hayes said to the Von

Erichs as everybody gathered in the living room after dinner. "They remember what I used to do, but they've all forgotten the way I was with Jimmy Garvin and the way I treat the fans now. Just because 'Bamm Bamm' and 'Jack' want to go to hell, it doesn't mean that I've got to follow them."

"Now, Michael," Doris interrupted, "we'll have none of that talk in this house."

"I'm sorry, Mrs. Von Erich," Hayes continued, "but that's just the way it is. I've chosen my path. They can go to hell without me!"



Hayes puts Parsons down with a sleeper. Parsons joined The Freebirds in an unofficial capacity before the big split.

"I know Michael shouldn't be talking that way about his fellow man," Kevin interjected, "but I can see the way he feels. He's sick of following the road to doom. He's finally realized that the right way is the best way, and I think we should help him, just like he's tried to help us."

"I agree," Fritz said.

"I really appreciate all your help, folks," Hayes said, "and I'd like nothing more than to run those guys out of Texas. Believe me, I'm absolutely sincere about that."

"I believe that you are," Kerry said, "and you can count on all the help in the world from me. That's a promise." □

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WWF TOURNAMENT

(Continued from page 27)



Vanna White and Bob Uecker were celebrity guests at the big event.

One Man Gang (with Slick) vs. Bam Bam Bigelow (with Oliver Humperdink). Gang pounded Bigelow early, but missed a clothesline and rammed into the turnbuckle. Bigelow took control and sent Gang to the mat with a headbutt and clothesline. Bigelow again floored Gang with a pair of flying headbutts, but when Bigelow rebounded for a big splash, Slick pulled down the top rope and sent Bam Bam to the arena floor. Bigelow couldn't return to the ring in time and was counted out at 2:56.

Jake Roberts vs. Rick Rude (with Bobby Heenan). The first round ended with a time-limit draw, thus eliminating both wrestlers. Roberts refused to submit to a reverse chinlock and attempted a brief comeback, but was eventually saved by the bell. With his feet on the ropes, Rude covered Roberts as the 15-minute time-limit expired at the two-count.

SECOND ROUND MATCHES

Andre the Giant (with DiBiase and Virgil) vs. Hulk Hogan. The opening second round match was the confrontation everybody had come to see. Andre attacked Hogan before the bell rang, but neither man could retain the momentum in this all-out brawl. Andre tried to put Hogan away with a chokehold, but the crowd rallied behind "The Hulkster."

Hogan clotheslined Andre into the ropes, and when Virgil tried to interfere, referee Joey Morella turned his back. DiBiase ran into the ring and attacked Hogan with a chair. Hogan chased him out, but grabbed the chair and hit Andre. When Andre grabbed the chair and smashed Hogan, Morella called for the bell and a double-disqualification at 5:22. Afterward, Hogan chased DiBiase and Virgil down the runway and suplexed Virgil as DiBiase escaped to the dressing room. "The Hulkster" then returned to the ring and body-slammed Andre. But Andre and Hogan, the two pre-tournament favorites, had been eliminated in shocking fashion.

DiBiase vs. Muraco (with Graham). DiBiase came to the ring without Andre and Virgil, but didn't need them. "The Million-Dollar Man" missed a flying elbow from the second turnbuckle, and Muraco delivered a devastating clothesline. A shoulderblock sent DiBiase to the mat. But as Muraco rebounded off the ropes, DiBiase returned to his feet, caught Muraco in midair, backed up, and clotheslined him off the top rope. DiBiase easily covered a stunned Muraco for the pin at 5:44.

Savage (with Elizabeth) vs. Valentine (with Hart). Although down for most of the match, Savage mounted a stunning rally. A flying axhandle from the top rope would have put away Valentine if not for Hart's interference. Savage then reversed a suplex and mounted the top rope for a flying elbowsmash. "The Hammer" nailed Savage in the gut and went for the figure-four leglock, but Savage reversed it into a small-package for the pin at 4:05.

SEMINAL MATCH

Savage (with Elizabeth) vs. One Man Gang (with Slick). Gang received a bye from the second round when Roberts and Rude were eliminated. (Continued on page 56)

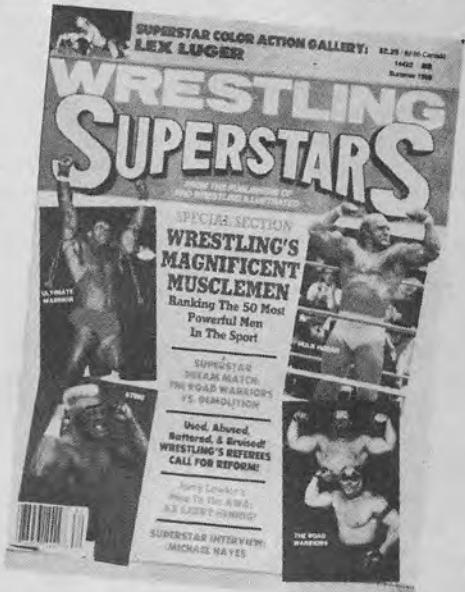
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WWF TOURNAMENT

(Continued from page 54)

and was clearly the fresh wrestler in the only semifinal match (DiBiase received a bye into the final when Andre and Hogan were both disqualified). Once again, however, Elizabeth helped determine the outcome. As Gang picked Savage up by his throat, Slick went after Elizabeth. Savage reached over the top rope to choke Slick, who tossed his cane to Gang. Gang beat Savage with the cane and was disqualified at 4:05.

TOURNAMENT FINAL

Savage (with Elizabeth and Hogan) vs. DiBiase (with Andre). An exhausted Savage had to deal with an early onslaught by DiBiase and the outside interference of Andre. With DiBiase lying prone on the arena floor, Savage climbed to the top of the turnbuckle for a flying elbowsmash. But Andre stood in front of DiBiase to protect him. Realizing he had to beat DiBiase and Andre, Savage told Elizabeth to get Hogan. DiBiase regained control, but as Hogan made his way to the ring, the crowd rose to its feet. Andre tried to grab Savage, but Hogan mauled Andre from behind. With eight minutes expired, DiBiase delivered a bodyslam and mounted the top turnbuckle. Savage grabbed DiBiase and threw him to the canvas, then mounted the turnbuckle for a flying elbowsmash. DiBiase slid away at the last instant and Savage crashed down on his elbow. The "Million-Dollar Man" then applied a sleeper and appeared ready to put Savage away when Andre tried to grab Savage, drawing the attention of the referee. With the ref's back turned, Hogan ran into the ring with a steel chair, clobbered DiBiase, and ran out before the ref returned to the action. Savage climbed to the top turnbuckle, delivered a flying elbowsmash, and covered DiBiase for the pin at 9:27. Hogan presented the belt to Savage, the crowd roared its approval, and the WWF had a new World champion. □

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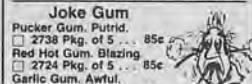
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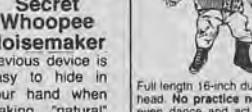


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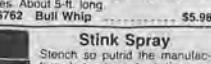
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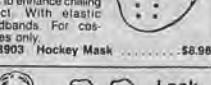
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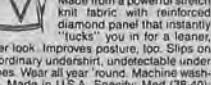
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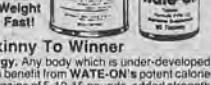
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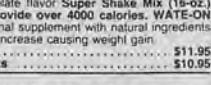
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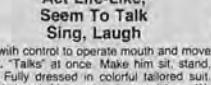
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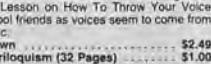
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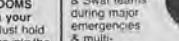
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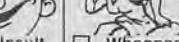
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TATTER

(Continued from page 8)

that's not acceptable," said Gilbert. "It's not enough just to pin him; I want him permanently eradicated so the Gilberts can rule Memphis as they rightly should. Funk should be man enough to do it."

"Eddie offered me a huge bounty to cripple Lawler, but he can keep it," proclaimed Funk. "It's enough of a thrill to be here to work with my good buddies the Gilberts. It'll be an even bigger pleasure to get rid of Lawler."

Gilbert previously offered Curt Hennig \$25,000 to cripple Lawler, and Hennig refused the money as well. Lawler claims that both Hennig and Funk have worked for Gilbert only because of the large payoff.

Despite Gilbert's efforts, it was Lawler who emerged with the victory in his first bout with Funk. During an April 11 match in Memphis, Funk had the upper hand when Lawler was locked in a spinning toehold. The Texan repeated the maneuver, and on the third attempt he knocked down the referee. Lawler used the opening to throw a fireball at Funk and gain a countout victory.

"This is just round one," said an

ecstatic Lawler following the bout. "Thanks to Gilbert and his hired hands, I've been burned, knocked out with chloroform, thrown through the windshield of a car, and clobbered with a shoe. They thought I was finished, but I'm still coming at Gilbert hard and fast. As for Funk, he'd better start looking into retirement options."

The hatred between Lawler and Gilbert has escalated since Lawler gained a measure of revenge on Gilbert by burning him during a March bout. Gilbert recruited Hennig and preliminary wrestler Scotty "The Body" for various plots to do away with Lawler, but "The King" remains intact.

"I've exhausted Gilbert's arsenal," boasts Lawler. "He's tried everything, but I'm still here. Now, maybe I'll look for some help to get rid of Gilbert, his sleazy wife, and his whole worthless family."

—Randy Swift

ATLANTA, GA: The Sheepherders are extremely unhappy with a series of mistakes made by their flagbearer, Johnny Ace, during sever-



EDDIE GILBERT MANHANDLES JERRY LAWLER

al recent bouts. The young protege of Butch Miller and Luke Williams accidentally struck his partners with the New Zealand flag in a pair of matches, turning probable Sheepherder victories into quick defeats.

Ace, who joined the Sheepherders last year, refused to comment on his errors. His mentors, however, have not been afraid to voice their displeasure.

"Acy acts too much like a bleedin' American wanker sometimes," said the gap-toothed Miller. "He's the main reason we lost those bloody matches. He's gotta wake up and stop daydreamin'."



THE SHEEPHERDERS

Adding to the rumored speculation about Ace's future is the fact that original Sheepherder, Rip Morgan, has been seen in attendance at NWA cards throughout the country.

"Just a bloody coincidence," spit Williams. "We haven't seen the Ripper in a while. We downed a few pints with him, but that don't mean nothin'."

Sources claim Ace is every bit as unhappy with The Sheepherders as they are with him. The blond wrestler is the third in a series of Sheepherder flagbearers, which has also included Jack Victory and Jonathan Boyd.

—B.W. Foreman □

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INQUIRING

(Continued from page 12)

ponent and the ringside fans would practically fall into shock; now, the sight of blood is commonplace. I don't condone an increase in violence in or out of the ring. I think it's just a case where the sport has evolved, styles have evolved, and the level of action has increased."

Peter Weyler, Lynchburg, VA: "Sure there is, but that's always been part of the game. What Warlord and Barbarian did to Road Warrior Animal is



Road Warrior Animal lies unconscious after being attacked by The Warlord and The Barbarian during a weightlifting contest.

certainly an act of brutality to be condemned. But then again, the Warriors, just by their style in and out of the ring, invite that kind of attack on themselves. Wrestling has always been a sport that thrives on the edge of survival. It's always been that way, and I hope it never changes."

Doug Platt, Princeton, NJ: "I think it's terrible. I don't watch wrestling anymore because of all the violence. In my day, bloodshed was limited to only the bitterest of feuds. Now wrestlers can do things that would be criminal offenses outside the squared circle. And the steel cage match! It used to be a rare event, but now it seems like



Ric Flair cries out in pain as he falls crotch-first onto the top rope during a match with Ronnie Garvin.

there's one of those every week! I don't want my children to grow up thinking that it's perfectly fine to allow such violent aggressions to rule a person."

Tony Armand, Chicago: "Well, if you're talking about Soldat Ustinov's sneak-attack on Baron Von Raschke with a 2x4, I don't consider that brutality at all. Maybe I'm a lot older than most of your readership, but I remember that Russia and Germany have always been bitter enemies. This goes way back to World War I, when I was stationed on the Eastern front. The Russians hated the Germans then, and they hate them now. Frankly, I'd rather see this type of antagonism worked out in the ring than on the battlefield."

Chet Hawkins, Coeur D'Alene, ID: "There's no question that there's too much brutality, but how do you stop it? Wrestling has always been a sport where emotions run hot. That's the beauty of the sport. Two evenly matched opponents can get in the ring and have it out, and the brutality is just an unavoidable offshoot of this aggressiveness. I think it's actually healthy. Imagine if a guy like Sting wasn't able to release his aggression in the ring! He'd have the worst ulcers ever!"

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WE ACCUSE

(Continued from page 10)



Surprisingly, a Hebner was permitted to referee the final match at WrestleMania IV.

sure that Earl Hebner never received a licence to officiate a WWF card? And being that they are so difficult to tell apart, how could the WWF allow a Hebner to referee the tournament final? We accuse the federation of gross negligence and carelessness in that they allowed a Hebner—either Hebner—to officiate this match.

WWF President Jack Tunney was the focus of major criticism for not adequately addressing the referee switch when he announced the WrestleMania IV title tournament. Indeed, this very magazine lambasted him in this column in our May 1988 issue. This was the same man who allowed the decision of an obviously biased Danny Davis to rob The British Bulldogs of their World tag team title a year earlier, a fact not forgotten by most wrestling observers.

After the February 5 bout, Hogan wondered: "Who did the plastic surgery on the referee?" To those who have no knowledge of the twin Hebner brothers, that may have seemed a logical—though farfetched—conclusion.

The June 1988 issue of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* offered photographic proof that both Earl and Dave Hebner had worked as referees in the NWA. Somehow, NWA officials were able to keep the two straight. But that task is apparently too much for Tunney, who never announced a fine or suspension

of either Hebner in the wake of the Indianapolis bout. Something was clearly wrong, but was it Tunney? Or could it have been DiBiase, who may have used his wealth to keep somebody quiet?

A victory by outside interference is not uncommon in wrestling, but one of the Hebners officiating the Savage-Dibiase tourney final leads to all sorts of questions. Did Hebner actually *not see* Hogan climb into the ring? Could he have been *paid* not to see it? It happened once, couldn't it happen again?

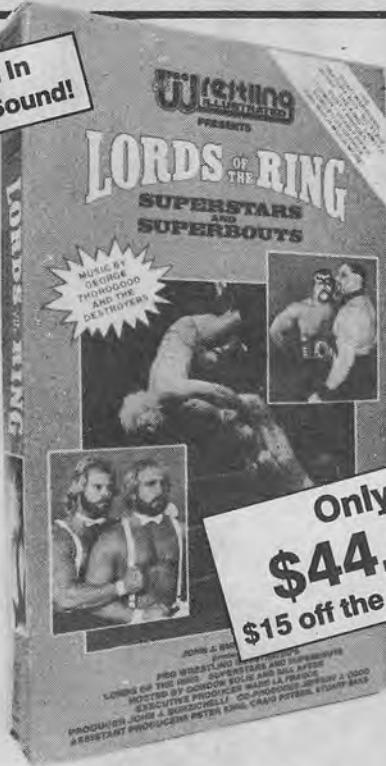
One of the things that made WrestleMania III so satisfying was the title match. Hogan pinned Andre without outside interference. While many have speculated that referee Joey Marella blew an early count on Hogan, at least his integrity was never in question. We wish we could say the same about Hebner.

It appears that the WWF would much prefer that we all forget that the Hebners were involved in robbing Hogan of his World title, but every time we see "The Hulkster" without his cherished belt, we won't be able to do it. And every time the fans see a Hebner as the referee of a match, they won't be able to trust him.

Was it Dave Hebner or Earl Hebner officiating the tourney final? We're still not sure. Until the WWF resolves the issue, we'll never be able to trust the Hebners or Jack Tunney. That's the real tragedy. □

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238, Honolulu, HI

10—RICK RUDE

246, Robbinsdale, MN

AWA*World Champion:***CURT HENNIG**

235, Minneapolis, MN

1—GREG GAGNE

220, Robbinsdale, MN

2—WAHOO McDANIEL

280, Midland, TX

3—JERRY LAWLER

234, Memphis, TN

4—SOLDAT USTINOV

265, Moscow, Russia

5—KEVIN KELLY

271, Oakland, CA

6—BOB ORTON JR.

245, Kansas City, KS

7—SGT. SLAUGHTER

310, Parris Island, SC

8—BARON VON RASCHKE

271, Berlin, Germany

9—JEFF JARRETT

200, Hendersonville, TN

10—THE GRAPPLER

280, parts unknown

WORLD CLASS*World Class Champion:***ICEMAN PARSONS**

245, St. Louis, MO

1—TERRY TAYLOR

225, Vero Beach, FL

2—MICHAEL HAYES

255, Marietta, GA

3—KERRY VON ERICH

260, Denton, TX

4—KEVIN VON ERICH

235, Denton, TX

5—TERRY GORDY

289, Chattanooga, TN

6—CHRIS ADAMS

228, Stratford, England

7—ERIC EMBRY

225, Lexington, KY

8—BLACK BART

261, Pampa, TX

9—BUDDY ROBERTS

247, Del City, OK

10—BILL IRWIN

250, Duluth, MN

TOP 10**1 RIC FLAIR**
243, Minneapolis, MN
NWA World champion**2 RANDY SAVAGE**
245, Sarasota, FL
WWF World champion**3 STING**
260, Venice Beach, CA
No. 1 contender: NWA title**4 CURT HENNIG**
235, Minneapolis, MN
AWA World champion**5 TED DiBIASE**
247, Omaha, NB
No. 2 contender: WWF title**6 LEX LUGER**
268, Chicago, IL
No. 3 contender: NWA title**7 TERRY TAYLOR**
225, Vero Beach, FL
World Class Texas champion**8 HULK HOGAN**
302, Venice Beach, CA
No. 3 contender: WWF title**9 MIKE ROTUNDO**
245, Syracuse, NY
NWA TV & Florida champion**10 OWEN HART**
223, Calgary, Alberta
Stampede North American champion**TAG TEAMS****1 THE ROAD WARRIORS**
Combined weight: 567 pounds
All-Japan Intl. tag team champions**2 BARRY WINDHAM & LEX LUGER**
Combined weight: 504 pounds
NWA World tag team champions**3 DEMOLITION**
Combined weight: 585 pounds
WWF World tag team champions**4 BOBBY EATON & STAN LANE**
Combined weight: 453 pounds
U.S. tag team champions**5 TULLY BLANCHARD & ARN ANDERSON**
Combined weight: 484 pounds
No. 1 contenders: NWA tag team title**6 THE FANTASTICS**
Combined weight: 462 pounds
No. 1 contenders: U.S. tag team title**7 WARLORD & BARBARIAN**
Combined weight: 655 pounds
No. 3 contenders: NWA tag team title**8 PAT TANAKA & PAUL DIAMOND**
Combined weight: 461 pounds
AWA World tag team champions**9 STEVE & SHAUN SIMPSON**
Combined weight: 430 pounds
Wild West tag team champions**10 BRUCE HART & BRIAN PILLMAN**
Combined weight: 437 pounds
Stampede Intl. tag team champions

OFFICIAL RATINGS

Top 10 and Tag Team ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board. Most Popular and Most Hated ratings are based on nationwide telephone and arena surveys of wrestling fans and on the volume and character of mail that comes to our offices. All other ratings are based on the official current positions of challengers to the top title in each category; certain titleholders receive an automatic spot in the ratings.

MOST POPULAR

1	HULK HOGAN
302, Venice Beach, CA	
Last month: No. 1 Most Popular	
2	STING
260, Venice Beach, CA	
Last month: No. 3 Most Popular	
3	RANDY SAVAGE
245, Sarasota, FL	
Last month: No. 5 Most Popular	
4	LEX LUGER
268, Chicago, IL	
Last month: No. 4 Most Popular	
5	KERRY VON ERICH
260, Denton, TX	
Last month: No. 6 Most Popular	
6	HACKSAW DUGGAN
280, Glens Falls, NY	
Last month: No. 8 Most Popular	
7	BARRY WINDHAM
236, Sweetwater, TX	
Last month: No. 10 Most Popular	
8	MICHAEL HAYES
255, Marietta, GA	
Last month: unrated	
9	THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR
280, Queens, NY	
Last month: unrated	
10	JERRY LAWLER
234, Memphis, TN	
Last month: unrated	

MOST HATED

1	ANDRE THE GIANT
497, Grenoble, France	
Last month: No. 2 Most Hated	
2	TED DI BIASE
247, Omaha, NB	
Last month: No. 1 Most Hated	
3	RIC FLAIR
243, Minneapolis, MN	
Last month: No. 3 Most Hated	
4	THE HONKY TONK MAN
255, Memphis, TN	
Last month: No. 5 Most Hated	
5	EDDIE GILBERT
222, Lexington, TN	
Last month: No. 7 Most Hated	
6	CURT HENNIG
235, Minneapolis, MN	
Last month: No. 6 Most Hated	
7	LARRY ZBYSZKO
248, Pittsburgh, PA	
Last month: No. 4 Most Hated	
8	ICEMAN PARSONS
245, St. Louis, MO	
Last month: unrated	
9	TERRY TAYLOR
225, Vero Beach, FL	
Last month: No. 9 Most Hated	
10	MIKE ROTUNDO
245, Syracuse, NY	
Last month: No. 10 Most Hated	

For period ended April 12, 1988

CUMULATIVE RATINGS

These ratings are based on the past 10 issues of this magazine. We have examined our ratings for each of those issues—in our Top 10 and Tag Team categories only—and assigned each position a point value: 10 points for a number-one rating, nine for a number-two ranking, and so on down to one point for a number-10 rating. The point values for all wrestlers in the past 10 issues have been compiled, allowing a maximum of 100 points. Each issue we'll present the top five finishers in each category. While our regular ratings reflect the past month, these cumulative ratings give an indication of wider trends in the sport.

SINGLES

1 — RIC FLAIR	95 points
2 — HULK HOGAN	87 points
3 — LEX LUGER	62 points
4 — RANDY SAVAGE	45 points
5 — STEVE WILLIAMS	42 points

TAG TEAMS

1 — THE ROAD WARRIORS	86 points
2 — TULLY BLANCHARD & ARN ANDERSON ...	74 points
3 — BOBBY EATON & STAN LANE	72 points
4 — THE HART FOUNDATION	64 points
5 — RICK MARTEL & TITO SANTANA	47 points

STAMPEDE

<i>North American Champion:</i>	OWEN HART
223, Calgary, Alberta	
1 — CHRIS BENOIT	218, Edmonton, Alberta
2 — MAKHAN SINGH	380, Saginaw, MI
3 — GAMA SINGH	220, Karachi, Pakistan
4 — JASON THE TERRIBLE	270, parts unknown
5 — JOHNNY SMITH	235, Manchester, England
6 — CUBAN ASSASSIN	236, Cuba
7 — BRUCE HART	211, Calgary, Alberta
8 — HASHIF KHAN	270, Jehol, Mongolia
9 — RIP ROGERS	238, Atlanta, GA
10 — STEVE DISALVO	298, Boston, MA

CWA

<i>CWA Champion:</i>	MAX PAIN
350, Iowa City, IA	
1 — JERRY LAWLER	234, Memphis, TN
2 — EDDIE GILBERT	222, Lexington, TN
3 — JEFF JARRETT	200, Hendersonville, TN
4 — BILLY TRAVIS	218, Houston, TX
5 — GARY YOUNG	240, Houston, TX
6 — DORY FUNK JR.	240, Amarillo, TX
7 — DOUG GILBERT	230, Lexington, TN
8 — BRICKHOUSE BROWN	225, Winter Haven, FL
9 — MIKE GRAHAM	230, Memphis, TN
10 — SCOTT STEINER	235, Detroit, MI

CONTINENTAL/USA

<i>Continental Champion:</i>	DUTCH MANTEL
224, Oil Trough, TX	
1 — MONGOLIAN STOMPER	229, Mongolia
2 — LORD HUMONGOUS	325, parts unknown
3 — TOM PRITCHARD	220, Houston, TX
4 — DAN DAVIS	238, Nashville, TN
5 — THE BULLET	234, parts unknown
6 — TONY ANTHONY	235, Bucksnorth, TN
7 — SCOTT HALL	290, Minneapolis, MN
8 — BUDDY LANDELL	236, Los Angeles, CA
9 — FRANK LANCASTER	239, Atlanta, GA
10 — HECTOR GUERRERO	218, Mexico City, Mexico

WWA

<i>WWA Champion:</i>	MIKE GEORGE
265, St. Joseph, MO	
1 — D.J. PETERSEN	245, St. Joseph, MO
2 — MASA CHONO	235, Tokyo, Japan
3 — BULLDOG BOB BROWN	238, Winnipeg, Manitoba
4 — RICK PATTERSON	275, Mile High, MT
5 — STEVIE RAY	295, Leavenworth, KS
6 — RUFUS R. JONES	275, Amarillo, TX
7 — KEN TIMBS	235, Atlanta, GA
8 — VINNIE VALENTINO	241, Albuquerque, NM
9 — LORD MALITAR	250, parts unknown
10 — CURTIS HUGHES	280, Kansas City, KS

RATINGS ANALYSIS

Every month, this column will tell fans how we go about rating more than 135 wrestlers in 12 different categories. It is a behind-the-scenes look at the most important—and respected—ratings system in the sport. This column is vital reading for all wrestling fans.

He's number eight ... but why? We're sure that many of you are wondering why former WWF World champion Hulk Hogan dropped six spots to number eight in this month's Top 10 ratings. Let's take a look at the three criteria for inclusion in the Top 10. Hogan's won-lost record for the ratings period (March 4 through April 7) was poor; he made few appearances and, in WrestleMania IV, wrestled in only one match, a double-disqualification against Andre the Giant. His quality of opposition was low; he pinned Virgil at the Capital Centre and also defeated Harley Race, who wasn't even entered in the title tournament. And Hogan has never rated high on inherent skill; he's basically a brawler who gets by on size and aggression. To return to one of the top spots, he'll have to regain the belt.



Hulk Hogan

Letter perfect. An excellent letter from Earl Brown of Middletown, New York, inspires debate about the Top 10 ratings in general, and two champions in particular:

Two wrestlers my wife and I have been keeping track of the past four months are The Honky Tonk Man and Ric Flair. It seems every match we see involving either of these two, we don't see clean pins or victories. So, to pass the time away, we have kept track of their matches and have figured out approximate percentages of clear victories (without interference, managerial help, foreign objects, and so forth).



The Honky Tonk Man

You put much weight on these things when you make up your ratings?

Is winning the main thing considered in your ratings? We have seen matches with Honky Tonk and Randy Savage where Honky Tonk used every illegal means possible to keep his belt. Even with Hart suspended in a cage, he finds a way to attack the referee and get himself disqualified.

Please let the fans know more about how you determine your ratings and how much weight is given to the above matters. We are tired of seeing this kind of stuff and think the federations should disallow anyone standing at ringside and to allow title changes on

disqualifications. Your magazine should pay more attention to this when you compose your ratings.

A few notes on Mr. Brown's letter: Honky Tonk has never been rated in our Top 10—for exactly the reasons stated above. He rarely wins his matches, and saves his belt by getting disqualified or through Jimmy Hart's interference. As we state on the ratings page, "Top 10 ... ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team." Honky Tonk rates very low on the first and third criteria, very high on the second. The Intercontinental champion, however, receives an automatic ranking as the top contender in the WWF.

Flair, on the other hand, rates very high in all three criteria. The man is a fabulously skilled wrestler who has scored many important, clean victories against top wrestlers. When Flair wants to wrestle, there's nobody better.

Rating the managers. We did this last year in the July 1987 issue of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated*, and it was very well received. Managers, of course, play a tremendous role in professional wrestling, and have much to do with a wrestler's success or failure. These are the best of the bunch rated in terms of success they've enjoyed recently, strategies employed, and ability to influence the sport as a whole.

- 1—**J.J. DILLON**
Four Horsemen
- 2—**JIMMY HART**
Hart Foundation, Honky Tonk Man
- 3—**PAUL ELLERING**
Road Warriors
- 4—**BOBBY HEENAN**
Islanders, Rick Rude, Harley Race
- 5—**JIM CORNETTE**
Midnight Express
- 6—**SIR OLIVER HUMPERDINK**
Bam Bam Bigelow, Paul Orndorff
- 7—**GARY HART**
Al Perez
- 8—**PAUL JONES**
Warlord & Barbarian
- 9—**PAUL E. DANGEROUSLY**
Abdullah the Butcher, Randy Rose
- 10—**ELIZABETH**
Randy Savage

Now on tap in our revolving ratings category is the World Wrestling Alliance, formerly known as the Central States area, which operates out of Kansas City. And there's plenty going on in the WWA. Mike George recently regained the heavyweight title from Central States TV champ Masa Chono, and Rick Patterson and Stevie Ray captured the Central States tag belts from Bulldog Bob Brown and The Cuban Assassin.

That's all, folks! Now we're going to sit back and wait for some more mail. The address is: "Ratings Analysis," c/o Sports Review Wrestling, Box 48, Rockville Centre, NY 11571. □



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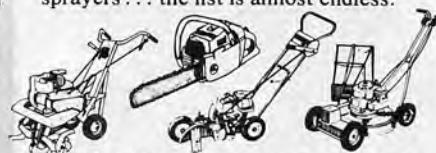
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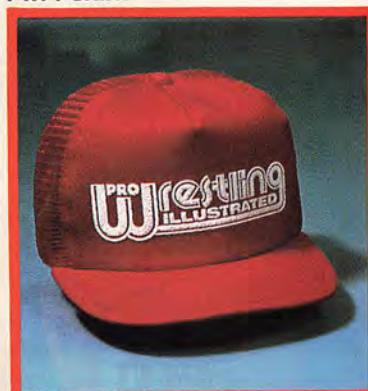
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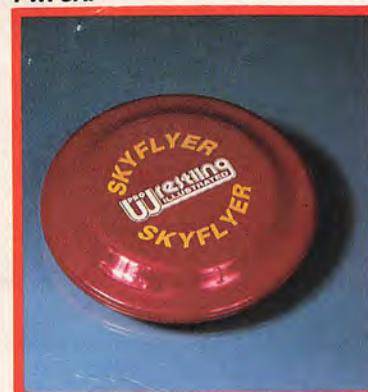
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